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Married the Wrong Man

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MARRIED THE WRONG MAN!

Benoni By
B. MENDENHALL,
DALLAS CITY, ILLS.

A True and Wonderful Story.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF WIS-TON-WIS, OR THE SECRET OF THE LEAD MINE.

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Married the Wrong Man.

CHAPTER I.

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Morehead, I'm going to walk myself down to that store and have just what I want. Needn't think you are going to keep me shut up here like a nigger all my life, do you, Mr. Morehead,—eh?"

"I'm nobody's slave."

"What in the world is the matter with you, Florence. It seems to me of late you are getting all wrong, and take offense at every little thing. Of course you can have what is necessary for comfort, but, you see, we must be saving. Money don't grow on bushes. I am denying myself."

"Yes, that's just the way, you always want to save, save, it's all the cry with you men. Now, I'm going to have things. I'm not going to work myself just to please you men. No, you bet I don't."

"Well, Florence, if you will be a little prudent, and we deny ourselves a little now, we shall have something laid up for a rainy day. We are just starting in the world, and if we get swamped, in the beginning, it will take a lifetime to correct the blunder."

The above conversation occurred between John Morehead and Florence, his wife, at the breakfast table one morning some five years or more after their marriage.

Florence Swan—that being her maiden name—was a

belle in the neighborhood where she was raised. Her father was a minister of the gospel, and, like most children of minister's families, Florence grew up fond of company and neglected to some extent in her education. True, she had a kind and obliging disposition, yet she had never been taught to curb her temper, and when in a bad mood she would show an ugly, vindictive passion.

Match-making mammas, in many instances, overlook the one great question of fitting their daughters for their proper sphere in life. Only too eager to find some one among the masculine portion of the genius nomo whom they imagine would do for a husband to some one of their daughters. They overlook the one great desideratum of a proper education for the wedded life.

But it is not the intention of the writer to enter into a discussion of methods, but to give a history of Mr. Morehead and his wife.

John Morehead was a young man of 27 summers, had been raised in the old orthodox Quaker church—and a man of a warm, loving heart—and a man who would at once give the impression that he was of a kind and generous nature. Generous to a fault, and of strict integrity, he was the idol of the neighborhood in which he lived.

And when he formed the acquaintance of Florence Swan, and had taken her out to parties several times, of course it was conceded by all that it would end in matrimony, and that it would certainly be an advantageous match.

John Morehead had inherited a small fortune from his father's estate, and had engaged in the merchantile businesss.

He had seen others engage in the same business, and was making money—that is, to all outside appearances.

But if he had turned to the merchantile reports, he

would have seen there that forty-nine out of every fifty were shipwrecked.

But he had pictured out to himself a lovely home and a good ond loving wife in it as the most enjoyable life to live in this world, and to this end and object he worked and planned manfully.

In the Morehead family there lived an old aunt, who had never married, and who strictly adhered to the old Quaker church and always had some dream to relate or some sign to interpret. She was always known by the kindly name of "auntie." She being a sister of the elder Morehead, was an aunt in reality—her christian name being Ruth—but she was never known by that name.

Sometimes she would address her nephew, John, and say: "Now, John, thee knows that thee must consider well before thee gets thy neck into the marriage halter. When thee once takes that step thee must stick to the scripture text, which says, 'if thou art joined to a wife seek not to be loosed.'"

"Well, auntie," John would say, "you know I don't say thee and thou and thyne, as you and grandpa does. We young Hickory Quakers have got out of them odd ways of talking long since, but, auntie, I like to hear you talk that way; it sounds so friendly and good, and then I suppase it's scriptuee, ain't it, auntie."

"Yes, John, thee is right, it is scripture, and good scripture, too."

"Well, aunty, I will take it for granted. But about them dreams and signs you have; I never put much confidence in them, or believen in them either."

"Well, John, thee must know that the bible says that in these days the young men shall dream dreams and the old menshall see visions; and thee knows the bible is true, John."

Such was the conevrsation that frequently took place between John and aunty.

But, as everyone spoke of John Morehead and Florence Swan, it was understood that it was in a matrimonial sense, and, as a matter of course, they were to be married.

Florence had a number of beaux, or admirers, and, being left mostly to herself about whom she should favor as a suitor, she became somewhat vain, because of seemingly being the favored one among the young ladies of the neighborhood.

There was one of her beaux that she favored most, a Mr. John Crane, a kind of wild, rattling, rambling, fellow, not possessed of any means—visible or invisible—whereby to make an honorable living in the world; yet, with a strong arm and the will with it, he would have but little to fear about making a living in the world, with a proper energy applied. No doubt but Florence favored this young man, and that her heart told her that she loved him. But the one idea of a little wealth in this world, and an inordinate desire to make a show among her neighbors, smothered out the finer feelings, the noble passion of reciprocal love, existing between her aud Mr. Crane, and the one grand mistake of her life was made almost at the threshold.

Marriage is considered by most people in this world as a matter of fact, and it forms an important act in the great drama of life to all those who enter the matrimonial state. And when rightly considered, it should be the one great aim of all to conform to the requirements thereof, not forgetting the divine injunction, "that for this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall become one flesh."

So, when John Morehead led his blushing bride to the

altar and pledged himself in the presence of God and the witnesses present that he would obey the divine injunction and be a true and devoted husband to his lovely wife, everyone said amen, "and Florence and John will do well." We shall see what the sequel proved.

However, before the nuptials were solemnized, old auntie took occasion to relate to John her curious dream as she termed it. Her story, told, was in this wise: In her dream she saw John walking along the highway as though on a long journey. She saw in the road before him three large yellow balls, or globes, like. The first was somewhat smaller than the others, the last one being larger than the two first. John walked on until he met the first ball, which, with some little difficulty, he passed and came to the next, which he also passed, but with increased difficulty; but when he came to the third one there was a great struggle, and it seemed as though John could not pass it, and in her great anxiety to see John get over the difficulty, she awoke from her sleep and considered her dream.

"Well, aunty," said John, after hearing her dream, "What is the interpretation thereof—as Nebuchadnezzar said to his wise men when he wanted them to explain his dream."

"Why, John, thee knows that to the wise belong the interpretation of dreams and visions, and we have no Daniel here to solve it. But it seems to me that thee must be careful in thy journey through life; it seems that thee will meet with difficulties in thy pathway."

"Well, aunty, I propose to let the dreams take care of themselves, and I will see what can be done to knock them yellow balls out of my road."

Yet there were certain misgivings lurking in John's mind as to his success in life. True, he and Florence had set up housekeeping, and matters seemed prosperous.

The mercantile business was getting along, and a large amount of goods sold, and in these days a vast amount of crediting was done; and John's profits were large, but a large amount of it was on paper and not in the till.

When John and Florence were married a month or more, and the honey-moon began to wane, he says to his wife:

"Florence, we are now wedded for life, we two rre joined together for weal or woe, what is mine is thine, and what is thine is mine, what God has joined together let no man put asunder. One promise, dear Florence, I would have you make; nay, I will join with you in this promise, or pledge. It is this, Florence, let us in the presence of God—calling him as a witness—make this solemn agreement: 'That we will never, on any pretence whatever, quarrel or use any angry words toward each other.' Now, Florence this may seem a little childish to you, but it seems to me it will do no harm, and it may be the means of doing good in our after lives."

But Florence was thoughtful, and did not promise.

For the two first times Mr. Moreheod renewed his stock of goods he had not much difficulty in getting a sufficiency for the trade, although he did not have the amount in cash he should have had in order to make a good showing to his creditors—most of his means being in accounts and notes, which was not money. Being inexperienced in the business, and eager to make a fortune at once, he did not at all times act with prudence and foresight.

Florence, too, (his loving wife) had become more and more vain and gay, and began to hint that they must live in grander style and be like other people—who had fine furniture and entertain company—as becomes people in high life.

John Morehead, being of a somewhat similar turn of mind, also gave ear to his wife's pleadings, and his expenses began to overbalance his income, and to make inroads on his principal. So that when he went to the wholesale houses the third time for more goods to recruit his stock, the doors were shut against him and more credit refused, and was also plainly told that no extension on old accounts would be grantud.

This was a heavy blow to the proud spirit of John Morehead; but the storm must be met. And the first thing he did was to break the news of his failure to get more goods to his dear wife. This being done with a heavy heart, John suggested to his wife that their expenses must be cut down, and that in order to succeed and get out of the dilemma great economy must be used.

That his creditors were disposed to be lenient, and give him a chaece to collect up his outstanding notes and accounts, he doubted not; but could it be done in time to avoid the impending crash,

He reasoned with his wife and laid down his plans but, no, his wife objected, and then occurred the talk at the breakfast table related at the commencement of this chapter.

John Morehead was conscientiously honest and proposed to make a divide of his effects with his creditors, and so do the best he could. Florence thought otherwise, and proposed to give up nothing, but to go at once to the store and help herself to whatever her fancy might dictate. As the day wore on, John became thoughtful and was in a quandary to know what to do under the circnmstances. That a crash was iminent was beyond a doubt and he could see no way out. At length he thought he would go to old aunty for advice. She might offer some consolation at least.

"Well, aunty," said John when he had found her, "I am in trouble—now what would you advise—I see that I am about wound to a close in my business."

" Well, John, thee has come to the first yellow ball, but I can't tell just now what is best to do."

"There is one way to tell about whether thee will prosper in this business. It is a sign, John, and I'll tell thee how to test the matter."

Well, aunty, you know I never believed in signs and dreams; you know I've often told you that."

" Well, John," says aunty, "thee came to me for advice, and thee is in trouble, and we had better not talk on the subject if thee objects to my plan of explaination."

"Well—well, aunty, go on with your signs, I will listen."

"Now, John," replies aunty, "when thee goes down to thy store, and if thee will take a piece of money from thy pocket and drop it on the plank sidewalk and it goes through a crack, why then thee must know that thee will be in bad luck."

"Why, aunty," replies John, "don't you know that most every piece of money that a person may chance to drop on the floor or on the sidewalk will go through a crack if there is one in thirteen feet of it." Why, aunty, I would not try the experiment for anything in this world."

"But, aunty," continued John, "what if the money don't go through the crack?"

"Why then, John, thee must know that thy fortune in the world will not be entirely wasted."

So John went out and slowly walked towards his place of business.

One thing was certain. A crash was now upon him, and no way to avert the impending doom. He had heard

of failures, but never dreamed that he himself would be the subject of one. If he could only get time and extension of credit it would help him. But that one thing—credit—he did not get at the full import of that one ruinous system. It was the practice which had ruined thousands.

When he reached his place of business, he found that the sheriff had taken possession and had locked it up.

John Morehead's friends gathered around him and extended their sympathies. Many were the suggestions made by them, and what it was best to do under the circumstances. Mr. Morehead was not wanting in many kind and warm-hearted friends and neighbors. They were almost driven to desperate deeds against the sheriff, but John counselled quietness and submission to the law aud authorities.

"No smuggling of my effects," says he, "my creditors must and shall be paid. They shall have their dues if God gives me strength of limb and soundness of mind."

"But fwat will yez be afther doin', Misther Morehead, whin the spalpeens will 'av all of yez goods and yez 'av nothin' at all—at all—to kape yez and the childher from starvin'?"

The above was spoken by a warm-hearted Irishman, whom John had in his employ for several years, and who, by the way, was strongly attached to the Morehead family. He was a true friend.

"Never mind. Tim," says John, "I'll find support for myself and family. Don't take any trouble for me. God has given me strength to fight the battle of life, and I will do what is right though the heavens may fall. We must obey the laws of our country."

By this time there had gathered quite a crowd of John's friends and neighbors, and long and loud were

their denunciations against his creditors who had closed his store, and looked daggers at the sheriff.

There was a gruff old sea-captain among the crowd, a generous, warm-hearted old duffer, who had quit plowing the main and was now plowing the soil. He proposed to John that they would—two or three of them—join in an obligation to secure his creditors, and that would give him time to get righted up, and so weather the storm—to use the tar's lingo—and was going at once to put his plans into execution by force.

But John bade them be quiet and desist from their angry talk, and demanded that they should disperse and go to their homes.

Just as John had turned to go back to his dwelling, Florence dashed past him, and pushing the sheriff aside, sprang into the store and closed it on that functionary. Then she commenced to pull the goods from the shelves and hide them away up stairs. Before John, the sheriff or the men outside could recover from their astonishment, Florence had secreted over half the goods contained in the store in different places.

By this time the sheriff had succeeded, with the help of John, in getting Florence out of the store and given her to understand that such proceedings could not be tolerated, and as she and John slowly walked back to their dwelling she began to upbraid him in not helping her to secrete and get away with the goods.

"Florence," says John, "I will do what is right in regard to the matter, and you must bear me out in all that is right. We have trouble now, Florence, but we are young, and with divine help we will succeed in the world yet. This is a sad blow on our fortunes—it can't be denied, and, Florence if you will only give me your kind words and smiles and bright countenance it will give me strength."

"But, John, why do you not make an assignment. There was Brooks, and Kershaw, and others, too, who have made assignments, and they live in grand style—see what fine furniture they have in their houses, fine sofas, chairs, and damask curtains, all that. Now, John, I'm just going to have them, too. Yes, and I'm going to have nice tea parties, and be like somebody. You needn't think you are going to keep me here all my life. I tell you, John, I'm going to have them goods in that store."

As John and Florence reached home, the conversation between them ceased.

Some of John's friends dropped in during the day to talk over matters.

Florence was sullen and morose in temper.

John Morehead began to think—indeed he now had ample time to look back over his career thus far in life—seriously. However, thoughts would intrude on his mind like these:

"Florence acts very queer. She did wrong in defying the law—she may endeavor to pass it off as a joke—in trying to beat the sheriff; but it was not right. I married her in all good faith. I promised before God and man to cherish, love and protect her- She done the same by me. It was a solemn compact. I wonder if a man can succeed with such a wo——; down busy devil!"

John had inadvertently let his thoughts drift into a channel that was not right in his mind, so he dismissed the subject and proceeded to take a walk to collect his scattered thoughts; remarking to a friend as he passed out that it might be possible for a man to marry the wrong woman.

As John walked on he became more calm and collected, yet he walked carelessly, not caring much where he was going; anything to get his mind settled and be

composed. Everything in a business point looked dark and gloomy ahead. One thing remained with him—that was good health. After wandering about for some time John returned to his home. Throwing himself down on a sofa, he buried his head in his hands and rested for some time in deep thought.

Florence tried to be cheeerful; in fact, she did not know to what extent John had become liable. She presumed that it was but a small affair for a person to fail in business, and that in a short time all would be afloat again.

Not so with John. The failure had sunk deep into his feelings, and his whole deportment and countenance showed that the failure had affected him seriously in mind. John had a former partner in business, who had died and left an estate in N. C., and in order to settle the business of the firm it became necessary for him to go to North Carolina. So John's friends counselled him to go amay from his affairs and take a trip to the old North State and settle his partner's business.

After counselling old aunty, John packed his valise, and taking passage on one of the splendid Mississippi river steam packets, he headed down stream, intending Memphis to be the objective point where he would take across the country by rail. This was just twelve days after the ever-memorable election of 1860, that placed A. Lincoln in the president's chair.

CHAPTER II.

The town of Danforth, where John Morehead had done business and where he had met defeat in his affairs, was situated on the east bank of the great father of waters several hundred miles above the city of Saint Louis, in the great state of Illinois.

As the Southern rebellion was then looming up, pol–

itics was all the rage on land or sea, on boats, cars, or in dwellings; and "secession," "nigger" and "Abe Lincoln" entered largely into the political arena and invaded every fireside.

Before John Morehead started on his journey, "old aunty" took occasion to speak in great earnestness to him, detailing to some extent the dangers he would be subject to on the southern trip. But John, nothing daunted, was willing to risk it.

"Thee knows," says aunty, "that them hot-headed Southerners will be very careful who passes through their states. They may take thee for an abolishionist, and thy neck will be put into the halter.,'

"Well, aunty, I don't propose to meddle with their slave notions. That is their business. And then, aunty, you know I voted the democratic ticket, and I am inclined to think that they will not molest one who is with them in voting.

"Yes, but thee must know, John, that the fire eaters down there count every person an enemy who does not own slaves and vote as they do. Thee knows, John, that they have killed people just for publishing their opinions. Thee knows that when our forefathers were driven out of England, because of their religious belief, they came to this free country in order to enjoy freedom of thought. The knows, John, that it is wrong to bartar in human beings—buy and sell them as chattels. I greatly fear that there is trouble ahead. God only knows what will be the outcome of this great question."

"Well, aunty," replies John, "I am disposed to let them enjoy their niggers. I don't want any slavery in mine, nor slaves, either. I see they are willing to let the North alone, if the North will let them alone. But I believe I would fight before I would see this good governmrnt torn asunder. I believe those Southern fire-

eaters ought to be whipped. I suppose that Abe Lincoln will not do them any harm if they will only obey the laws and not secede from the Union. I think they will become ashamed of what they are doing down there, and be in favor of maintaining the Union.

"Well, John—God help us—it is to be hoped and trusted that there will be no bloodshed or war."

"I'll tell you, aunty, if it comes to war I am in favor of going down there and learn them a lesson. I'll shoulder my musket and help to whip them in."

"John, thee knows that our religion teaches not to shed blood. We cannot let our angry passions get the better of us so much as to go to war. That will never do. Thee knows that the bible says that thou shalt not kill. We should obey God rather than men. Our mission is peace in this world."

"Well, aunty, I know that our old Quaker church teaches not to shed blood—not to fight.

"But what will we do when we are forced to defend ourselves, when they load up their great big cannon and point at us what shall we do—grin and bear it aunty?"

"Still, John, thee must forbear."

"Well, aunty, when I get down there I will say 'thee and thou and thine," and they will take me for a Quaker and pass me through."

"God grant it may be so, John."

In due time John Morehead arrived in St. Louis and took passage on a large Southern steamer for Memphis, and then by rail to Charleston and up to Greensboro, N. C., where Moreheads relatives lived.

Nothing much of importance transpired on the journey until he reached Columbia, S. C., where he was detained for a few hours in order to make connections with the trains running north. While sitting in the office of the hotel, John heard loud and boisterous talk-

ing at the depot, and on going out to ascertain the cause, he saw a group of men and boys around a tall, robust-looking man dressed in the garb of a railroad engineer and who was claiming to be a Union man and talking vehemently that he was born on Virginia soil and that the Southern states had no right to secede. The crowd was disposed to lynch the engineer, and perhaps would have put their threats into execution had not some friendly person got him aboard the train going north.

On the train John found that the engineer's name was Turner, that he had a general railroad pass over all roads in the South and Florida, but on account of his Union sentiments he was turned back by the fire-eaters as a dangerous man to be in their country.

As the train drew up at Chester, on the line between North and South Carolina, John and the engineer got out of the cars together and went up to the hotel, with others, in order to wait for the regular train, which would be due at 10 p. m.

Again the engineer was assailed by the patrol—as they were called there. While sitting in the hotel, his papers were demanded and his baggage searched. Nothing was found to indicate that he was an abolitionist or one on any secret mission, but the patrol was not satisfied and demanded that he should leave the country at once. It was in vain that he claimed to be Southern born and that he was a Union man. Some of the fire-eaters procured a rope, and demanded that he be hung at once as a "black abolitionist." As the engineer left the hotel, he started for the train on a run with about fifty of the patrol at his heels shouting to hang him, kill him.

In the intense excitement then raging in the South, and in fact all over the country, the persons who were traveling on the cars in company with the engineer, be-

ing desirous of remaining quiet, did not take part in the discussion going on between the patrol and their victim. But as the leading ones of the squad became more and more bold in their demands on him to show his private papers, he became very earnest in his protestations that they must not molest him, that he was a Southerner himself and was entitled to their protection.

When the engineer reached the depot, he was surrounded by the yelling, hooting mob. The race had been for life, as it were; but not being able to shake off his tormentors, he fell on his knees and began begging for his life, pleading for mercy to be spared; that if permitted, he would at once leave the country and never return. Just at this juncture the same persons who had assisted him at Columbia again interfered and got the affrighted man once more on the cars. And as the shrill whistle sounded the time to start, Mr. Turner settled down into a seat beside John Morehead, and once more they were going north as fast as steam aud wheels could carry them.

Very little, if any, conversation was indulged in by the two persons as the train sped on, but encugh of the engineer's history was obtained by John to give a clue to the situation. He was a regular licensed engineer and had a general pass over most of the railroads in the South, down into Florida. His papers were signed by the most prominent railroad presidents in the North and his object was to get employment on some of the South, ern roads, but owiug to his strong Union sentiments he was warned to desist and not attempt to put his ideas into practice. In fact all Uniou men were warned to leave the South.

John Morehead's place of destination was reached by

the train in a few hours, and getting off at the station saw no more of the engineer.

Meditating on the scenes he had that day witnessed, he began to suspect that the hot-headed Southerners were determined to precipitate a bloody war. However, when among his quaker relatives and friends he felt more at ease, and talked pretty freely with his old uncles and aunts on the situation of affairs in the Southern states.

The patrols were almost continually on the tramp, but never molesting the Quakers or Friends—the latter being their proper name—notwithstanding several of them took and read free-soil and abolition papers.

"We are Friends of peace; we want no war:" they would say when questioned on the subject of secession. "We desire not to offend anyone; war is unholy." And they usually stood by the text; but as a rule they were anti-slavery, and well posted on the great questions of the day.

After transacting his business John Morehead started on his return journey homeward. But before leaving his old Quaker relatives and friends at Greensboro he became acquainted with a middle-aged darkey woman, who had been a slave down in the cotton-growing states, but had escaped from her owners and had lived among the society of Friends or Quakers in the old North State, they furnishing her with food and shelter. This negress had but one name that was known, and that was "Quag"—funny name that. She had formed an intense liking for John Morehead, and wanted to accompany him to Illinois, where, she said, "de nigger war free, and dat's what dis chile wants." But John sternly shook his head, and said no.

The way in which John Morehead became acquainted with this old darkey woman was in this wise: Quag

had learned that he was from Illinois, and knowing that it was a place where the negroes were free, she lost no time in trying to have a talk with John on the way how to get to that free state, but being very timid she was some time in getting her plan to work. Finally mustering up courage, she thus addressed him: "Well, Massa John, da tells me that yo is fum a free state, where da darkeys are free from slavery."

"Well, Quag, I am from Illinois," remarked John when he observed how earnest she was to know something about a free country.

"I live in a free state. I don't want any slaves about me."

"Well, Massa John, I's gwine to go wid yo to Illinois. I wants to be where I can get pay for my work' and if yo will take dis chile out dere I'll work all de bressed time for yo, I will, Massa John.

But John Morehead shook his head with an emphatic "No."

He did not want to be seen traveling north with a negro, especially so in such troublesome times.

When John Morehead arrived home, he found that his time would be occupied in arranging and settling his business.

Times set in very hard, the state banks began to trem- ble and quiver in their transactions, and confidence was almost wholly destroyed in commercial circles. The Southern States began to secede from the Union, South Carolina being the first, then others followed, and all kinds of business became to a more or less extent deranged.

But what was John's surprise one morning, on going to his door, to find Quag sitting there on the step shak. ing with cold and nibbling a cold biscuit.

"Why, what in the world brought you here, Quag?"

were the first words that escaped John's lips after he got over his surprise.

"Why laws, Massa John, I jest cum here, I did, from de ole Norf State; Massa John, fore God, I could not stay dare. I tell you da was after dis chile, and I node if I could jes get into dis free state of Illinois, or to Chicago, I would be all right."

" But how in this world did you come so far. Did anyone help you?

"De Lord bress you, Massa John, I jes come on de ground railroad—so da called it. But, Massa John, de good Lord and them Quakers helped to get me way out here."

"Well, Quag, how did you find where I lived?"

"Why, Massa John, you know dey had de under ground railroad to Richmond, and I axed dem Quakers dere where you lived, and none of dem node. So I was jes going to the poor house one day, wen I sede a man who said he was from Illinois, and I axed him if he node Massa Morehead; when—de Lord be praised—he said he lived in de same town. So I says, dis chile is going dere. And so, Massa John, I jes come; sometime on de railroad and sometime under de ground, and de Lord knows how I got here, but I'se here. Massa John, alive and a poor, worn out ole nigger Wench."

"And now, Massa John, if you will jes take care of dis chile till dat ole massa down Souf gives up the chase after me, I'll be a good nigger, and work for you and missus to pay you. I wants to be free, I does, and I can hoe cotton and do most anything."

"Well, Quag, can you cook, and wash, and do housework."

Well, Massa John, I'll try."

So John Morehead took Quag into the kitchen, and told Florence to care for the poor darky woman.

Florence was disposed at first to kick poor Quag out, but on a more sober second thought she concluded to put her to work.

As the winter wore on and the rumblings of war became more distinct every day in the South, business became more and more deranged and unsettled.

John Morehead had closed up his business so far as he could. He had done all that a conscientious and honorable man could do. But time hung heavily on his hands.

Florence had become very cool and distant. So much so that her temper was at times beyond control. Instead of being a loving and devoted wife to her husband's interests, and to cheer him in the hour of trouble, she seemed to be the very opposite.

"Florence" says John one day, after a long and protracted silence, "you at one time had a kind and gentle nature, at least to all outside appearances. Why is it that you have of late become so wayward and cross in your disposition, why can't we be as we once were? It is certain that we brought nothing into this world when we came into it, and it is certain that we will take nothing out of it when we leave it. Now should we not bear with our misfortunes in this world, and make the best of our ill luck? It seems as though my arm would become strong again, with your smiles to lighten the task. Work to me would be a pleasure, a delight, and it would—with God's help and your approving smiles—not be long ere we would be in prosperous circumstances once more."

Florence seemed to take in the idea, but demanded that John should appropriate everything saved from their failure to themselves, and that they live in a finer and nicer house and have finer furniture than their neighbors.

"I tell you, Mr. Morehead, I am going to have things in my house. Do you think that I'm going to have my neighbors pass by me with a contemptuous look, just because we don't have things as fine as they. I tell you I'm not going to stand that. John Morehead you are a fool to pay your debts. Nobody pays their debt."

There was a flush of crimson came across John's face, and there was a quivering of his lips for a moment. He was about to reply to the last remark of Florence, when their conversation was abruptly broken off, as a neighbor's boy came rushing into the house with a daily paper, shouting as he handed it to John:

"The Secesh have fired on Ft. Sumpter and on the vessel sent to supply the garrison with provisions. Jeff. Davis and Beauregard are going to fight the United States. Abe Lincoln has called for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion. What say you. Mr. Morehead, are you going to fight or are you going to show the white feather?"

It took some little time for John to get the full import of the news, and then only after carefully reading the daily over carefully under the head of telegraph news that he got the full force of the situation.

Jumping to his feet and snatching up his hat, he made a dash for the door, remarking to Florence as he passed out that he would go at once and help to fight the "Secesh." He would learn them a lesson about seceding from the Union.

At the gate he was met by Aunt Ruth, who had been a listener to the news the boy brought, and who had fully comprehended the situation. She saw trouble ahead when John declared his intention to fight the Secesh. She determined to prevent John from going if possible. And when she stopped him at the gate and demanded what he was going to do, she saw at once that

there was fire in his eye. But nothing daunted, she began to expostulate with him in this wise:

Now, John, thee is not going to war. Don't thee know it is sinful, and the Bible says, 'Whosoever shedeth man's blood is a murderer.' I tell thee thee must not fight, thee must not kill thy fellow man."

"Well, aunty them Secesh down there have fired on the old flag. They fired on Fort Sumpter and have committed treason. Aunty, do you think I am going to sit here idle and see them traitors cut such shines as that? No, aunty, I'm not the man to do that, I'm going to fight. I don't want none of their negroes, but they shall not go out of the Union with my consent. I'm going. Get out of the way, aunty. I see it. Fight! War! War! That's what it is."

"John, I think them people down there ought to be—Down evil spirit. Peace; we are friends of peace. She had almost let her angry feelings get the better of her gain, but quickly controlling herself, she once more appealed to John to not go out to unholy war. It was sinful, inhuman and contrary to the scripture.

All the argument that aunty could bring to bear on John was of no avail, until she reminded him that he had promised to take care of her in her declining years and that at her death he was to inherit what of her worldly effects she might be possessed of.

John began to think seriously when aunty made this last appeal, when Quag came out of the kitchen and began to take in the situation.

"Lawd bress you Massa John, is you gwine to the war? De Lawd help you to fine my ole man down Souf. Dey has got him down dare hoein' ob de cotton and de cane. Massa John is it sho you is goin' to fite dem Secesh? You'se got to be mighty careful, dey will kill yo, Massa John, sho."

"Why, Quag, have you got a husband way down in them cotton states? You came away up here in the north and left him down there to work for them fire-eaters."

"Why, Massa John, I tell yo how it was. Dey jis sole my ole man to dem slave drivers what cum roun' buyin' up niggers, and dey didn't want dis poor ole chile. Dey say Quag is no good to work in de cotton. So I jes run away when they took my ole man down Souf. Dey said I was a good wench in de kitchen, and dat I could cook for de niggers."

"Why, Quag, did you not go along with your poor old man?"

"Why, de Lawd bress you, Massa John, dis chile wanted to be free. I jes wanted to come to a free state once. I tell yo a pusson what has been a slave all de bressed days of one's life, why, dey wants to be in a free country jes to see how it seems to ones self."

"Well, Quag, in this noble free state of Illinois you are free as long as you can keep the slave-hunter from tracking you with his blood hounds, and the fugitive slave law to back him."

"Wat dat, Massa John? Wat dat big word you call law."

"Why, Quag, it is this: One Congress has made a law that when you negroes run away from your masters down South, they call on the United States marshal and he has to summon a posse of the people to turn out and help hunt the runaway slaves. And if anyone refuses to go and help catch a runaway negro, then that person is fined and put in prison."

"Well, Massa John, I know what yo means, but dem big words do kind o' scares me, dey does, sho. Now, Massa John, do you tink dat dem big marshals will come here after dis poor nigger."

"Well, Quag, that depends on whether they find you or not. If they find you here they will have you sure. They will put cahins on you and take you away down in Dixie and make you a slave again."

"De Lawd bress yo, Massa John, where can dis poor ole darkey hide. I tell you I jes die first before I go back to dem slave drivers down Souf. I'se on free ground and I's jes gwine to stay. Dey may take dis poor ole body back, but they can never take de spirit along."

"Well, Quag, you must keep hid, and be very careful that the hounds dont get after you."

As John turned to go out of the gate he met Tim, who had come to learn if John had heard the war news.

"Well, Misther Morehead, do yez believe it, them Secesh are goin' to fight. Begorra, it's a bad day for thim fellers down there when they git Uncle Sam foreninst thim. Now, Misther Morehead, and are yez goin' to the war and get shot and kilt and then be dumped in a hole, all for the blackguard of a nagur."

Well, Tim," replies John, "I'm goin to the war, and I want you to stay here and take care of things. There is the house and the corn and Florence and the babies."

"Sthop, Misther Morehead, it is meself as is goin' wid yez to the front. Does yez think I'd be afther stayin' behint and let yez go to the war, and yez be shot and wounded and left to die on the cowld ground? No, begorra, I wad not do that. And, bedad it's Tim Moriarty that's goin' wid yez, Mr. Morehead. Moind yez, that. Does ye think I am a coward, and sthay here lookin' afther the pigs and the likes o' that. No, divil the bit will I do it. I'll go wid yez, John Morehead and sthay wid yez till the moon turns to green chaze."

As he hurried down town he saw knots of the citizens talking together and gesticulating in a vehement

manner, and what must be done and how they would whip the Secesh into the Union again.

John soon joined in and it was finally agreed that there should be a mass meeting called for the evening in order to get an expresssion from the people. John Morehead was captain of an independent military company at that time. The company was organized under the state law, and they were equipped with Harper's Ferry muskets, and well officered.

At the meeting in the evening there were several speeches made, all of the strongest kind of Union sentiment. John tendered his company to the Governor of the state for immediate use. The company was accepted; first for three months, then for three years..

All was now bustle and excitement, and the shrill fife and rattle of the drums was heard almost constantly on the streets of Danforth.

John Morehead and his comrades were tireless in their efforts to put the company on a solid war footing. Each individual member of the company seemed to think that on his shoulders alone depended the entire preservation of the Union.

Midst the hurry, bustle and excitement of preparation, John Morehead had not time to talk to Florence about the war fever but wery little. But as the company was ready to go to the place of rendezvous, and only one night left for the members to bid adieu to home and friends, John sat down to have a good talk with Florence and aunty before leaving. He began the conversation thus:

"Now, Florence, I'm off in the morning. You and aunty and Quag, I think, can manage to get along until we come back. Our dear children, Erney and Rosa, they must be well cared for. I know I shall be sore distressed if, when far away, I shall think of the dear ones

at home—that they might be in want. But, Florence, I know you will be ever careful, and watch over them as a mother only can. Florence, I shall be economical, and send all my money home."

"Yes, John, I want you to send a plenty, and be sure you send it to me. I shall want all, and more too, for I've got to have things in the house. I've got to have window curtains and carpets and rocking chairs. Yes, John, just you send me all the money. I shall need every cent of it."

"I tell thee, Florence, that I could not use one cent of such money," says aunty, "don't thee know, John, that, such mony is blood money."

"It seems that to take money that is earned by fighting and killing human beings is wrong, and I could not with a clear conscience use such money. Why, John thee must know that our people will not have anything to do with land warrants issued to soldiers. Them warrants is the price of blood. It seems as if I could see the blood stains on them papers."

"I'll take the money earned by the soldiers, and the land warrants, too," says Florence. "Just give me the money and I'll have things I want, I'll bet you."

"Well, Florence, you will get all of my wages; only take care of the dear darlings, Erney and and Rosa. Would to God I could take you and them along, Florence. It would make the service lighter, and I believe my arms would be stronger. But men for war and women to stay at home and to endeavor to lighten the cares and burdens of the soldiers at the front. Women should endeavor to make home happy and pleasant to all."

"Florence, it grieves me much to hear you talk so and be so coveteous about wealth. I do not care for the

money I shall get, but it is the honor and preservation of my country that I desire to sustain."

"Never mind about the honor, John," says aunty. Thee knows that to do right is honor at all times."

"Why, aunty, that is the very principle I am going to fight for. Is it right for them Secesh down there to dismember this glorious Union."

"Well, John, I sometimes think that them slave drivers ought to be—— Down evil spirit—thou canst not rule in me—get thee behind me Satan. I came very near forgetting myself, and let the carnal mind predominate in me. But once more I say, get thee behind me, Satan. John, thee must not shed blood if thee is obliged to fight. Thee must not kill."

"Why, aunty, what is a soldier for. Must I stand still and let them shoot me down. No, no, aunty, that will never do."

"I'll tell you, John," says Florence. "You just kill all you can. Everyone of them ought to be killed and mashed into the earth, and be sure you send me all the money you get. I shall need it all to get things for my house. Be sure and send plenty home all the time. I shall need every cent of it. Do you suppose I am going to stay here like a blame nigger and get nothing? No, no."

"Yes, John," continued Florence, "I will get along if you send me plenty of money. Aunty can preach her Quakerisms, and I will look after the dollars. Yes, you bet I can do that. I don't know what I shall do with Erney and Rosa. I know they will annoy me nearly to death. I expect I shall have to send them to the country. High-ho! I wonder how it will go to be a war widow."

As Florence went on in this strain of talk, she became more excited in her denunciation of the rebels.

"Yes," she continued, "every one of them ought to be burned at the stake."

Florence, it seems, was as much of a fire-eater as her cotemporaries down South. She was, to say the least, very impulsive, and took every occasion to vent her anger on the Southern fire-eaters.

As it was getting late, and the company would be off in the morning, the family retired for the night—John Morehead, for one,—to spend the last night with his dear ones. It might be for the last time—no earthly mortal could tell. Many others were in the same category with him—had left wife and family, friends and all—for the cause of the Union. They all slept soundly, or seemed to at least, until awakened in the morning by the shrill notes of the fife and rattle of the drum.

John Morehead was up early, and calling to Florence and the children to be up and bid him good-bye, was about to turn away, when little Rosa caught her papa's hand, and looking up into his face, says: "Papa, can't you take little Rosa with you. If you get sick you won't have little Rosa to bring you water to drink. Then dear papa, you may get shot. O! how dreadful that would be. And, papa, you have to go to them dreadful hospitals, and maybe die. Papa, dear papa, won't you let me go with you. And Erney, can't he go too. We will be good children."

"Yes, papa," chimed in Earny, "why can't we go along? O, how I would like to have a gun and go to war; but I believe I could not carry a musket, it would be so heavy."

John hastily brushed away the tears from his eyes, and catching up Erney he pressed him to his breast and covered his cheeks with kisses. Then, setting him down, he took up Rosa; and, as he did so, he came near breaking down entirely. But, bracing up, he covered little

Rosa's cheeks with kisses. Long and earnest he held the child in his arms, until the tap of the drum admonished him to be going. Setting little Rosa down and kissing aunty, he turned to embrace and kiss Florence.

"Now, John, be sure and send me all your money," says Florence, as she took John's hand for a final adieu. "You must do that—I'll take care of it for you. I'll do the best I can."

As John turned away Florence began to cry, and a few natural tears coursed their way down her cheeks.

As John hurried down to the rendezvous appointed on the streets he met a newsboy with a daily paper who shouted to him to buy a paper. As he thrust his hand into his pocket to get the requisite change, he pulled out a quarter in such a hurry that in an unguarded moment he let it drop on the sidewalk and, as it rolled along, John began to snatch at it in order to secure it safe in to his possession again, but the slippery little coin kept on rolling until it found a crack and dropped throngh. As he saw the quarter disappear beneath the sidewalk, he all at once recalled to mind what old aunty had told him about a piece of money going through a crack when dropped. Muttering to himself something about signs, he joined his comrades and was on board the boat steaming down the river to the appointed place of rendez vous.

Before passing on in this account, let us turn for a little while and observe how Florence seemed to take the departure of her husband for the war.

It is but justice to her to say that in many respects she was a kind and charitable woman, but very impulsive and headstrong even to foolhardiness.

Not having been trained in her childhood to respect the rights of others, she naturally became very over-

bearing and haughty in her demeanor whenever she was crossed in her willful ways. After her marriage with John Morehead—and presuming that he was rich and able to satisfy her every want, and that she must outstrip her neighbors in the elegance and splendor of her home—she would become sour, surly and cross.

An hour after the departure of John and his company, we find Florence sitting in the parlor, giving vent to her feelings in this wise:

"Well, I suppose I'm a war widow, now. I guess I have enough to live on. I wonder if John wants me to be his slave? What did I marry him for? He had a snug little farm. Poor fellow. Marry for love—poh—love—I would not marry any Morehead that ever lived. Marry for money, that's my ticket. O, my! O, dear, what shall I do to kill time. My dear husband—I wonder how long he will be gone. Fiddle sticks, what's, what's—I'll do as I please and shan't ask nobody. Who's going to cry after that booby? Not I. I'll let folks know who I am! But, suppose John does not send back any money? I'd better look to that. But I know he will—he promised too, and John is not the man to break his word, I know that. Well, well, I've got to do the best I can. Some one said the war widows would be cared for. Well, I'm a lone war widow and I shall be taken care of. Let me see: I'm going to have a fine carpet on my floor and nice damask window curains, and then I'm going to invite my neighbors in and havea nice tea party; and I'll beat Mrs. Blake over the street. She shan't crow over me any more!"

Thus Florence went on soliloquizing to herself,—in such a manner as to attract the attention of aunty in the adjacent room, who came out to see what the matter was with her.

"Why, aunty, I'm just going to have things a little

nicer now. John is gone and I am going to have a nice carpet, and window curtains, and tea parties—and won't that be nice, aunty?"

"Well, Florence," replies aunty, "thee ought to be more frugal and saving. Thee knows that the rich can live in fine houses, but it is not for every one to live in fine houses and have nice things. It is only those who live saving and frugal that attain to riches; and thee must know, Florence, that there is not that enjoyment in riches that people imagine. It is a contented mind and good health that are to be most desired in this world. Let us, Florence, endeavor to do all we can to alleviate the toils and hardships of the soldiers who are braving the dangers of the battle-fields and poisonous mias-mas of the South."

"Why, I suppose, aunty, that is charitable, and I, for one, am willing to help the soldiers. I do hope John wont forget to send me all his money."

CHAPTER III.

We pass now a period of four years, The great Re bellion had been going on for three years or more. Fortunes had been made and lost in less time than it takes to write this story.

The village of Danforth, where the Moreheads lived, had been the recruiting grounds for several military companies. In fact, it had been almost entirely stripped of the able bodied population. But many of those who enlisted, and bade adieu to family, friends and home, never returned to reap the benefits of their toil.

There were little green mounds all over the Southern states that told of the resting places of the dead. The head-board at the grave gave the name of the deceased soldier; but those who were fortunate enough to be able

to return to their native towns, were welcomed with honor.

Such blows had been struck against the Confederacy that it shook, reeled, stumbled and fell—broken asunder and dismantled forever. The sun,browned and toil-worn soldiers turned their faces homeward, were paid off and discharged.

We find that Capt. Morehead had passed through the war unscathed by shot or shell, but almost broken down in health. In fact, the once robust frame of Capt. Morehead was a mere wreck; and in this condition we find him with his family, gathering up the fragments of his former investment in merchandise, for when the war was raging nothing could be done in the way of collecting outstanding accounts.

It is true that John had earned good wages while in the service, and had, agreeably to the request of Florence, sent almost his entire earnings home, only reserving a small portion himself for actually neccessary pocket change. But sickness in the family and other demands of an urgent nature kept the amount of money sent home by him down to a small amount.

And once again we find him planning and working to make his family comfortable. The two children, Earney and Rosa, had grown to be quite large, and Florence was, to all appearances, a kind and loving wife and a good mother. The long siege of the Civil war had smoothed down her temper—in fact, she had became a prominent member of the Sanitary Commission and had became an active worker in the church.

Quag had been faithful to the family, and John had found her in the kitchen at work attending to the culinary department in a very creditable manner.

Old aunty was the first to welcome John back after he had embraced his wife and two children.

"Well, John, thee has got safely back from the war. I hope thee did not have to shed blood?" enquired she, after the first greetings were over.

"Why, annty, I could not tell how it was about that. You must know that a Captain don't carry a gun. I only had a sword, and you see I could not shoot with that very much."

"Well, the Lord be praised, John, if thee is clear of that sinful act."

"Well, but aunty, some times a Captain uses a gun and shoots, too. You are not a soldier, aunty, but listen to me. If you were in battle and a great big Secesh should come at you with two six-shooters, would you stand still and be shot down like a beef."

"Well, John, I expect that Secesh would have to be sh—. [Aside]. There is the carnal mind at work again. Get thee behind me satan. [Aloud.] Why, John, thee could tell the man who had the two guns to stand aside or they might get hurt."

"Why, aunty, we were not particular about that, in fact, we generally shot as we thought and we did not take time totell them Secesh to get out of the way. We shot most of the time right where the rebels were and they ran against our bullets in some way or other. We got used to it aunty, we got used to it."

"Well, John, I'm glad thee has got back home safe. But what in the world are they going to do with them Freedmen, now there is no more slavery? And the good Lord be praised for that!"

Quag could hardly contain herself while listening to the conversation between John and aunty. She hung on every word that was said and when at last she found a chance to speak, she bursted out crying and trying to talk at the sametime.

"De Lawd be praised, Massa John, and yo is heah

safe. De Lawd bress you, Massa John, now dde at darkies am free. I wants to see my ole man. Massa John, why didn't yo' fetch him heah? I'd be so glad to see him. Massa John, done yo' sede him down there?"

"Why Quag, there are a great many thousands or more of negroes in the Southern states, and I could not tell which was your old man. True, I saw so many of them that I thought they all looked alike."

"Tank de good Lawd. now the slaves are free. Dere is no mo' ob hunting wid dem bloodhounds. Dere is no mo' selling my ole man, no mo' sellin' de luhly chilens; no mo' de whipen post; no mo' oberseer's lash. De good Lawd be praised! O, tank de good Lawd! Bress yo', Massa John, I jes feel like I mus' hollar. Now we lib like white folks. Now we git married like white folks. O, bress de good Lawd!"

Quag might have kept on in this strain, but John admonished her to desist from further demonstration in that direction.

"But Massa John, I jes couldn't help it. I feels so hallalujerm like, Massa John; but I'll stop it. Laws aint I glad, do!"

John and Florence began to plan for the future, once more, As it has already been stated, it had always been the one great aim and object of his life to have a beautiful and pleasant home. It seemed to him that a domestic life was the most enjoyable; and John set himself about the attainment of this object in dead earnest. He had succeeded in saving some money out of his army wages and with the help of what he was able to gather from the effects of his old notes and accounts, he had a pretty good start once more.

Florence appeared to be more thoughtful, and entered into John's plans readily. At times the two would hold long interviews in regard to the future,—

what they would have, and how their home should be beautified and adorned.

Erney was now getting up into his teens and was an uncommonly bright boy for one of his age.

But John was out of employment, and he was continually planning to get some position where he might earn a competency for himself and family. Florence would occasionally become morose and sour tempered, but John would say:

"Cheer up; I'm going to be all right some of these days."

"I saw," he continued, as they were talking one day, "an article in a paper this morning that said soldiers who went out to help subdue the Rebellion should have the offices at the disposal of the Government, because they helped to defend it: Now if this be the case, Florence," he continued, "I'm going to see if I can secure a position of some kind in order to earn some money. It seems to me I could work day and night to get back my lost business."

"But surely, John," says Florence, "you would not leave home and family in order to make money. It is true I like to have money and fine things in my house, but then you would have to be away so much."

John looked at his wife for a moment to determine if she was in earnest. The tone of her voice seemed so, and being fully satisfied that she was in good earnest, he caught her hands in his and said:

"My dear Florence, I am so glad to hear you talk that way. For some time past you have been so cross that I had become disheartened and some times was really in despair. But these words of kindness nerve my arm, and I feel better and stronger to grapple with the world; and I shall go forth with a light heart to my task. Now, Florence, I'm going down town and I shall

make inquiry in regard to the offices the soldiers are to have. You know when I went to the war, that Tim, my old trusty hand, went too and we got separated at the battle of Chickamaugua, aud I never could hear of him afterwards. I have written to the War Department at Washington in order to get some information, but have as yet received no answer. It may be he is dead, poor fellow. He was a good soldier and he never would leave me while in the service until we got separated at that battle."

"Why John, he may have been taken prisoner and of course you would not hear from him."

As Florence made the last remark, John passed out at the door and started down town. As he passed the Postoffice, where a news stand was kept, he purchased a daily newspaper and seating himself on a box, began to read. He became so absorbed that he did not notice a person approaching him, briskly, dressed in a soldier's uniform, for they wore their soldier cloths for a year or more after the war closed, until he felt a touch on the shoulder and a familiar voice called to him:

"Faith an' is it yourself, Misther Morehead, that's alive and well. Sure' an I thought that thim rebels had got yez sure, at the battle of Chickamaugua. I know I see thim on both sides falling right and left."

John jumped to his feet and grasped Tim by the hand, and exclaimed:

"Why God bless you Tim! I thought you were dead. I could never hear of you after that charge on the rifle-pits at Chatanooga."

"Begorra, Misther,—excuse me Capt. Morehead."

"Never mind the Captain part. I don't want to be called Captain, Tim. I'm a little Quakerish, and you just call me John Morehead; and tell me how it all happened with you, and where have you been?"

"Begorra, that's jist phat I was goin to tell yez Now Misther Morehead, it was murther in the first degra, it was. You see the spalpeens tuck me a prisoner of war, so they did, and they stuck their bay'nets into me, so I jist had to give up."

"Where did they take you to, Tim?"

"Take me, did yez say, Mr. Morehead? They took me to the infernal regions, so they did. I tell yez, if there ever was a hell on earth it was in Andersonville, Mr. Morehead, and that's thrue, every word of it. If ould Nick was not there, all uv his imps was."

"Well, Tim, you got out safe and sound?"

"Sound, did yez say Misther Morehead? And if ever there was a poor soldier come out of that hell-hole, afther bein' in there a while, he would have to be iron clad, if he came out safe and sound. Jist look, if yez plaze, to me limbs and me arums—no bigger thin pipe stems."

"I am inclined to think they did not feed you very well, Tim, while a prisoner."

"Feed me, did yez say; would yez like to have the bill o' fair, Misther Morehead? I,ll tell yez fwat it was: It was nothing-at-all at-all for breakfast. and we ate what was left for dinner and supper, so we did; and for slapen we had the could ground, wid the sky and stahrs above us for a covering. And thin the crawlin' insects to bite us and kape us rollin' from side to side. And thin we had to stahnd and see our dead comrades carted away every mornin', loike so many pigs. Bad luck to thim murthern thaves! May St. Peter turn his big keys on them in the bottomless pit. Call it what yez loik, but it was murther in the first degra. And thin would yez believe it, them statesmen and all the beig men of the nation a walkin' and struttin' around wid dere fine clothes on, and shoulder straps on, and livin' in foin

houses, and atein' the best that grows on Gad's grane earth—and we starhvin. Houly mither, I Moses! I wondher fwat human bein's is made for? I done no."

"Well, Tim, you are out and back again, and among friends. You can have a home with me as long as you choose. So you go to the house and Florence or Quag will get you some dinner, and you must rest awhile."

"Fwat you say, Misther Morehead? Is that nager wid yez yit? I taught she was down south lookin' afther her ould man. Faith and I'm thinkin' she'd as well look for a stray pig in a 100-acre corn field."

"Never mind the wench. She is a good kind person and a good cook, and as soon as she gets enough money she is going back down South to find her old man."

Tim did not wait for a second invitation to go, but went on to Morehead's house, and John went on reading his paper. He was soon again absorbed in his news items until he had obtained all the information apparently that he wanted. Then. folding it up carefully, he put it in his pocket and slowly walked down the street. As he did so he mused to himself in this wise:

"I see the ex-soldiers are to be favored in regard to federol and other offices in the gift of the people and also by the President and those who have the dispensing of favors in that direction."

"Let me see," continued John, "There is no office in this town in the gift of the people, or anyone else. Hold—let me see again—there is the postoffice, but there is a very good man in possession of it now, and a staunch man too,—that won't do."

As John was in such an earnest thought, and so absorben in his musings, that his last remark was made so loud that his old friend, Jo Baker, overheard him as he passed by his shop and he called him in with the remark:

"What is it, John, you are talking about? I guess you were in dead earnest. You thoeght out aloud, didn't you John?'

"Why yes, Jo, I am in dead earnest. You are right there."

"Well, what is it, John? May be I can help you out of the difficulty."

"Well, Jo, it is this: I see that the ex-soldiers are to be favored with offices, that is, they are to have any office in the gift of the President or the people, providing they are qualified and perform the duties of any such they desire."

"Well, John, as you are out of a job, and you are an ex-soldier, why not put in your claim?"

"That was just what I was thinking about when you called me in. But you see there is no office in this town but the Postoffice, and that, at present, is filled by a good Union man. Of course he is no soldier, and I don't want to oust a good Union man."

"Poh, John, never mind that! If you desire the office why just get up a petition to the Postmaster General. I'll sign the first name on it for you and then you will get enough on it to send up, and I'll warrant you'l get lt."

Now this Jo Barker was somewhat of an influential citizen in Danforth; had at the commencement of the war professed to be a strong Union man, but had, toward the last, become somewhat embittered against the Government, presumably on account of he not being favored with a good paying military office. But when the war closed he had concluded to make amends and favor the soldiers.

John thought the matter over for some time. It was true the office did not pay much in the place, but it would be a stepping stone to something else.

"Well, Jo," continued John, "I'll go home and have a talk with the folks and if favorable, I'll be back after dinner and we will start a petition for the Postoffice and see what will be the result."

As John broached the Postoffice business on arriving at home, the idea seemed to be favorably received by the family, especially by Florence, who was not slow in discovering that there was something there that promised money.

So it was arranged that the petition for the Postoffice should be circulated at once and as many names as could be obtained placed thereon. It was not long before over a hundred names were procured on the petitiou, and it was duly forwarded to the Department at Washington, D. C., for approval and action.

Months passed and no word was received from it. John began to be despoudent. He had worked at whatever he could find to do, but could not do much, owing to his crippled condition from injuries received in the service.

The summer wore away and the fall months were coming in with their goldən leaves; and barns and granaries were full to overflowing, for the American citizen-soldier could turn his hand to fight the battles of his country or to the tilling of the soil, as circumstances might require. So when the war was ended, they stacked their arms and again turned their attention to the tilling of the soil and cultivating their neglected farms, for the fruitful land gave forth her yield in abundance.

The Autumn months gave way to the cold, bleak December and John Morehead had about given up the idea of obtaining the Postoffice. True it was that there were very strong friends of the soldiers at Washington —members of Congress—who done what lay in their

power, for the "boys in blue" were importuned by their constitutants at home to lend their aid and influence for the Union soldiers. Let us see:

But time and patience produce wonders; and as the cold weather began to grow severe, an earnest appeal was made in behalf of the old veteran by influential men in power, and on Christmas day John Morehead was presented with his commission as Postmaster of Danforth.

As John eagerly bore the precious document to his home and family, great was the rejoicing thereof, and especially with Florence, who began to see visions of fine things for her house. But the most delighted person was Tim Morarity, who, on learning the facts in the case, jumped to his feet and catching both of John's hands, exclaimed:

"Bedad, but I node yez would git it. Begorra, but Captain—excuse me, Mr. Morehead, I forgot yez was a Quaker. John is fwat I'll call yez. I was going to say them spallpeens as was thryin' to kape yez out iv the offis are all iv thim blackgards. And its Tim Morarity as will tache thim a lesson, by the way iv a crack over the head wid me shelalah—ballawhack! Hurrah, Mr. Morehead, it's meself as 'll be mail conthractor and carry the lethers for Uncle Sam, and then its ivery one will get a big fat letter as wants it. Mr. John Morehead will be Postmaster and Tim Morarity the United States Mail Carrier. Sure and that'll be a foin handle to me name, moind yez that."

Tim was in such ectacies that he executed an intricate double shuffle or Irish jig, all the while flourishing his shelalah as one who had been trained to it from his youth. John cautioned him to keep cool and not get excited.

The next thing for John to do was to get a room or

place that would be suitable wherein to put the office. One was easily obtained and he at once entered upon the duties of his office. Matters now began to be prosperous with him once more and, as money was not only plenty but a drug, at the close of the war it could be obtained at a low rate of interest and some times without interest.

John's credit was in the ascendent and a small stock of goods were procured, which, in connection with the Postoffice, enabled him to get his head above water and assume the air of a merchant once more. Thus we find Mr. Morehead again on a good footing and looked up to by his neighbors as a man of consequence.

CHAPTER IV.

We go back now to a time just before the close of the war and find that a widow lady of near forty-five summers had moved into town and hung out a sign as follows: "Mrs. Dedcom, Dressmaker." She was a near neighbor to the Moreheads and an acquaintance quickly sprang up between Florence Morehead and this widow lady.

This woman, apparently, had been well raised, had a good education and had three husbands—all dead. Most of her leisure time she spent at the Morehead dwelling; was to all casual observers, an earnest and devoted Christian; would make long prayers. and never missed an opportunity in prayer meeting to ventilate herself and her ideas on scripture and scripture texts. Her physiogomy was not to any great extent prepossessing. Shill she had a way about her that was pleasing, and being vivacious and a good conversationalist, would readily engage the attention of those whom she would come in contact with, having a large, long nose with a small wart on one side.

John Morehead never could like this woman. There was something about her that was very displeasing to him, and besides she was always talking on "women's rights," and that women were nothing but slaves in their present condition; that they should be enfranchised and hold important offices same as the men.

She had converted Florence to her ideas and Florence had listened until she became a regular disciple to her ideas.

About one year after John had settled down to business, on coming home one evening he found Mrs. Dedcom and Florence engaged in an earnest conversation. So earnest were they tnat they did not notice John's appearance at first.

"Now Florence, you must know," Mrs. Dedcom would say, "we women are going to have our nights. We are going to vote and hold office just like the men do. We have been slaves long enough, to the men; and then again, Florence, we are not to be tied to one man all the time. I tell you when I marry a man and I don't like him, I'll just quit him, divide up, and look out for some one else to marry. I tell you I'm not to be tied to one man all the days of my life because it is the law. A fig for such a law! Then we are to have just as much wages as the men."

"Why," says Florence, "your talk smacks strongly of Freelovism. You are not a Freelover are you?"

Mrs. Dedcom: "Why not? Haven't I a right to love who I please?"

"Yes, Mrs. Dedcom," says John, "I should say you have a right to love who you please, provided you can get one to love you. This matter of love is a kind of reciprocity, aint it Mrs. Dedcom?"

"Well, Mr. Morehead," replies Mrs. Dedcom, snappishly, "you need not fret about that. I was only show

ing the true principles of the relations which should exist among the human race, and especially between man and woman, to Florence; and that matters pertaining to wedded life are all wrong in this world."

"I infer," says John, "from your conversation that you are an advocate of Women's Rights, or Freelovism, or Socialism—I don't know which."

"Well it is not necessary for you to know. You men are always trying to keep us in ignorance, and be slaves to you Masculines. I tell you, Mr. Morehead, we are going to be free; do you understand? The marriage relations are all wrong as the now exist and should be entirely abrogated. Did you never hear of a man marrying the wrong woman, and that their affinity was antagonistic to each other?"

"Well, well, as regards that," replies John, "I never heard of a man marrying the wrong woman, but I 'have some times thought that a woman might marry the wrong man. But tell me, Mrs. Dedcom, you are a firm believer in the scripture I see, which says that 'when man and woman are joined together in matrimony, they twain shall become one flesh;' 'and what God has joined together let no man part asunder.'"

"Mr. Morehead, that was said in olden times when people did not know any better. But nowadays we have learned different. We have become enlightened to a great extent and a new order of things has been inaugurated."

"Well," says John, "new or old, I never yet found anything better than the Bible as a guide to go by and I don't think I shall desert it now. I prefer the good old way. It seems to me to be the best. Our forefathers taught us to observe the Good Book; and in that book we learn that God created man in His own image and made him to have dominion over the beasts of the

field and the fowls of the air; and he created woman from man for a helpmate and companion, not a slave as you state, Mrs. Dedcom."

"No sir, Mr. Morehead, nor to helpmate him, either. We women are going to be free, entirely free. That will be the order of things."

And passing out, she slammed the door behind her. John stood for a few moments in silence. Then taking a chair, he sat down beside Florence and spoke in this wise:

"Florence, I have observed for some time past that Mrs. Dedcom's idle time, and she appears to have a good 'eal, is spent with you. Now Florence, to be plain and honest with you, I don't like that woman. I think she is stuffing your mind with all sorts of nonsense and foolishness. She has got some new fangled ideas in her head about women's rights and tomfoolism, until she has become crazy on such things."

"Why John," observed Florence, "she is a woman of knowledge and has read all about those matters and ought to know. There are the Jones and Markams—they all patronize her, and they all say she is smart."

"Well, Florence, I do not like that woman at all. She may be a good meaning person—but I know one thing, I don't want any person to be a slave for me much less a woman. Neither would I want a woman or wife of mine to dabble in the muddy and filthy pool of politics. Man by nature, being the grosser one and entrusted with the more responsible burdens of life, such as digging and delving in the earth, guiding over the stormy sea the frail barks, and of handling the mus ket and canon in times of war, needs a helpmate of a more refined nature; one to whom, when the toils of the day are ended, he can apply to for solace and comfort; one to whom he can pour out his joys and sorrows to,—

but no slave, Florence, no slave, but angels of mercy, peace and love; to sooth the sick and afflicted, make glad the way-worn traveler, when worn down by fatigue and marching. No, Florence, none of such nonsense do I want, as that woman preaches."

As John was about to go on in the same strain, Earny, now quite a lad and who had been helping his father in the office, came into the room and told his papa that there was a man down at the hotel who wanted to sell him goods by sample.

"He is a nice looking man," Earny continued, "and wears a big black plug hat; and he said for you to come down right away and buy a bill of goods."

"O my," says Florence, "wont that be nice—to have a big stock of goods and a big store."

It was getting somewhat late, but John put on his overcoat and hat and went down to the hotel, accompanied by Earny, and found the man—a commercial runner of the house of Gyves & Co.—with a large assortment of goods displayed. As John entered the room, the runner stepped forward with a bland smile, extending his hand.

"Mr. Morehead, I'm glad to meet you. How is your health and your family?"

John was somewhat taken aback by the friendly manner in which the man addressed him, for he was unacquainted with this new way of selling goods. It is needless to say that John was easily pursuaded into buying quite a bill, and of course he got credit for them easily, as the name of Morehead had been reported to the Commercial Agency as being perfectly good for small lines.

Business matters were now flourishing with John and sales were satisfactory. However, it would have been much better for John if credit had been refused him, at

least to as great extent as that which he obtained.

It might be well to remark here that the credit business proved to be a system that shipwrecked hundreds, nay thousands, of good men. Men who launched out on the commercial sea, getting goods on so easy terms, naturally became careless and sold on credit to persons of uncertain stability, and the consequence was a crash sooner or later. Not one in a hundred, as a rule, succeeded in business, especially in selling goods.

As the months passed away into years, John Morehead bought and sold goods on a fair profit, which, in connection with the office, enabled him to get along in the world swimmingly.

However, Florence became more vain and lavish in her dress and expenditures—so much so that large demands were made on the purse of John Morehead, who began to make objections to the outlays of Florence's. In fact, it had become a matter of serions import to John, for he had made draws on Postoffice funds which did not belogt to him and which his securities were liable for.

Matters went on for some three years or more, when John began to discover that his accounts were not evenly balanced with the Government at the end of each quarter; and his creditors were again importunate.

John Morehead should have profited by his former experience and remembered the maxim, "that a burnt child dreads the fire." But time, the great healer of all maladies, makes one forget misfortunes to a greater or lesser extent. And so it was with him. When busiress was prospering he forgot, in a great measure, his former failure. However, John had great natural resources and was always wide awake to expedients, and generally managed to hridge over all hard places. and when he got in a pinch for money he was often times

helped through the bad places by one Joseph Gobher, a German Jew, who lived in town and who was a money lender, and managed to get big interests on his loans whether he got his principal or not. If he got his interest, the principal was a matter of secondary consideration and of small import True he would always endeavor to secure himself in some way, especially if the interest or bonus offered was big enough to excite his cupidity. He would get the interest in advance, generally, and it was a long time before he discovered that he was loosing money by letting the principal go. Some times he would be induced to take a bill of sale on some imaginary piece of personal property, by sharpers who wanted money, which they never owned and which never existed.

The first question asked by Mr. Gobher when a customer would come for money, was: "How much interest can you pay me?" And some times the bonus asked was more than the principal.

John Morehead had on several occasions got money from him when in a pinch, always paying it back promptly, which pleased Mr. Gobher, as he liked punctuality. A strong friendship sprung up between the money lender and John. The former would come to him for advice very often and which was one source of or cause of the intimacy existing between the two.

It is proper to state here that this Mr. Gobher had come from the German provinces some time before the war; had worked in New Orleans, and passed over into Mexico by way of Brownsville and Matamoras, where he had amassed a considerable fortune. But getting disgusted with the Greasers in that country, and becoming afraid of being robbed—a thing by no means uncommon in that country,—he had come up into the United States among "de Yankees," as he termed them.

He and John Morehead had long and frequent interviews about the Mexicans, their government and laws, and especially the brigands that infested the couutry.

"I have frequently heard," says John at one of these interviews, "that those brigands who infest the country carry off persons of wealth and note to the mountains and after having them secure, demand of their friends a large sum of money by way of ransom."

"That was frequently the case when I was there," says Gobher. "I know it to be too true, as I had that experience myself."

"What," says John, "were you ever taken away by the brigands?"

"Vel I youst recon I was. I told you, mine frient Morehead, how dem sings bin. You see dem mountain robbers da haf frients in every town—what you call dem tings vot you shute mit wooden ducks, bench birds or pigens?"

"I presume you mean stool pigeons, Mr. Gobher."

"Yes, that is youst vot I means—dem as dells de robbers who is rich and who is boor. Vel you see, ven da ask me about my affairs I youst tole dem pigeons dat I vas a poor Ducthman and haf nodings but mine close and mine tools. 'Vel,' da say, 'dat is all right, but we don't believe you. Yo be von Dutchman from Holland and ve no you haf some money.' Vel, I say, da want a poor ole Dutchman da come and get him.' So ven I go to mine bed I youst study about dem brigands all nite, I vas so fraid for mine self. But den, Mr. Morehead, dere was mine money; and if dem ugly fellows know it, vy den I vas a goner."

"You mean," says John, "that your money would be a goner."

"Vel," says Gobher, "it makes all de same. My money and me is all de same. Vel I youst took my

money and I hide him avay in de ground; und I says, now you Mister Robbers, you haf some troubles mit dat money. You find him. Vel, would you believe it, Mr. Morehead, von day dere vas a fine looking Greaser, he come to my shop vere I vas making some saddles, und he says, 'Mr. Gobher, I haf a fine horse oud dere in de grove. I vants you to make a saddle to fit him. Senior vil please to come und see de horse.' So I vas not tink, und ven I was oud in de grove, dere was more as twendy of dem brigand fellows come ride round me; and da say, 'Youst get up on dat horse and go mit us.' Vel I sees how it vas bin and I youst got on dat horse."

"Why, where did they take you to?"

"Dake me to? Vy to de mountains, to be sure. Und da say, 'Now Mister Gobher, you can del your frents dat da youst haf dot money, oud into dese mountains, or ve hung you oup."

"Well how in the world did you get away from them, Mr. Gobher?"

"Vel I youst del you, Mister Morehead, how dem sings bin. You see dem fellers vas great on blayen carts, und Monde of dree carts, und trinken der glaret vine; und ven da got up a big game, I says I bet you on dat cart if I haf some money. 'Vel den,' ses de boss robber, 've vill dake dat bet. Youst blank down der monish.' How can I do dot, ses I, uud mine money is at der shop in der down. 'Vel,' ses he, 've will youst sent a man mit you und you go and get the monish to bet on dat cart,' So I ses all ride; and dat feller he got his big cutlas and youst makes me go before him; und I node he had orders to kill me if I vas going to get away. Dinks I. ole feller I am not going to gif up dot money youst now. So I vatches my chance und ven dot brigand vas not votching close I, durns arount und gif him such a blow dot send him douwn into a

deep gully. Und I youst made dracks for de town, I del you."

"Well, Mr. Gobher, I suppose you got your money all righ?'

"Not much, Mr. Morehead, dot money is dere yet in de grount. I dels you dot no man can find him until I go back und digs him oup. I youst sells my shop und doals und efery dings, und comes to de United States.'

"Well, Mr. Gobher," says John, "you won't find that money when you go back."

"Not find him, eh?" says Gobher, "don't you nefer mind, Mr. Morehead, I show you."

John Morehead was much pleased and interested in the man's story. But to think that a Jew would come away and leave money buried in the ground was to him, to say the least, a contradiction of what was generally conceded to be the trait in a Jew's character. He might be a stool pigeon himself.

CHAPTER V.

There lived in the towu of Danforth a family consisting of the parents and four children, by the name of Ramble. Hezekiah was the Christian name of the one who should stand or set at the head of the table. He was a shiftless kind of a fellow; done what he could to provide for his family, but who subsisted, generally, by borrowing from their neighbors. It had become chronic with them to borrow something, so much so that no one of their neighbors thought of denying them anything when asked for in their way.

Hezekiah would attend all the public gatherings about the neighborhood, would be at any trials before the Justice Court and get on the jury, or be a witness in some case, and manage in some way to get a few dimes each week—in fine he was a kind of odds and ends,

providing there was not much work to be done.

Mrs. Ramble would do a little work occasionally for her neighbors, but most generally passed her idle time in gossiping and borrowing a little sugar or a little coffee, and some times a little flour, from her neighbors. And by this means the Ramble family managed to eke out a precarious living

Of the family there was two boys and two girls. The eldest (a boy) William, was disposed to be a different type from his father and try to make an honorable pathway through life; but the three others were disposed to follow in the footsteps of their parents.

There had sprung up between William Ramble and Rosa Morehead an acquaintance, which was easily to be seen would end in something more if nothing intervened. But Rosa's father, with a quick discernment, was not long in determining what this acquaintance would end in if suffered to go on unbroken. At the time this chapter opens, we find him talking with his daughter in this wise:

"You know, Rosa, that the Rambles are a worthless set and I do not like to see you favoring William Ramble as a suitor. You should look to a better class of people than the Rambles."

"Well, papa," Rosa would say, "William appears to be so different from the rest of the family that one would be inclined to think that he was of no kin to the other members of the family."

"Well Rosa, I have a right to you, as a father is the one to teach his children and guide them in the way they should go, and it is my desire and request that you have nothing more to do with the Ramble family. Why only see Rosa, only this morning Mrs. Ramble was here to borrow a little piece of meat for breakfast."

"I know it, papa, but it is not William's fault. He

works and earns wages, and then he studies of nights. He intends to make his mark in the world, so he says, and I believe it."

"Well, Rosa, I don't want this matter to go any further. I love you, my child, as a parent can only love his child. Your mother has become so estranged of late that a father's yearnings naturally turn to his children."

"Well papa, dear papa, I will try and do as you say. I will not encourage William to come here any more, though I believe he intends going out into the world soon to see if there is not a way for him to make his mark. He told me yesterday, papa, that he was ashamed to have his mother and the children go about borrowing of our neighbors so much. But he said his arms were now strong and he was going to get a permanent place. But papa, I will try and do as you say."

"Well, Rosa, it is my wish and request that you have no more conversation with him."

And so saying, John Morehead turned away from his daughter and passing out of the door, left Rosa alone in the room. As the last steps of her father died away, Rosa thus soliloquized:

"Well that's the law laid down and by papa, too. who has a right to command his children; and his children should obey in all things consistent with—with— My, some one knocks! Who in the world can it be? I hope it is not William. He must not come in. My father's commands must be obeyed. But why should he not come? He may be now ready to start out on his trip to better himself in the world. If it is him he shall come in, in spite of papa."

Again the knock was repeated and Rosa hesitating no longer, went to the door and gently raising the latch, saw William standing without.

"O my," exclaimed Rosa, as the light fell on the countenance of William. "O dear, my papa just gave me orders not to have anything to do with you. O why did you come here, William! What shall I do?"

"Miss Rosa, give yourself no uneasiness. I shall not enter your house again, if that is your father's request, I assure you. I just came to say a word and to bid you goodbye, for I go out into the broad world tomorrow to help myself and earn a place among men. And Miss Rosa I thought I could not go away without telling you."

These last words were spoken as though they came up with a gulp, and William tried to hide his emotion. But Rosa, naturally of a quick conception, saw a tear course slowly down his cheek, which he tried to brush away unseen. Instantly all the womanly nature roused up and taking William by the hand, thus addressed him:

"Dear William, do not cry about this. I did not want to hurt any one's feelings. Papa was very much in earnest when he spoke as he did: but I don't want you to feel bad about it. I know I like you, and you must come in and stay awhile; and—"

Rosa stopped short in her speech. She had admitted some things she did not intend; but it came from her heart and too late to take back. William though but a mere lad yet, saw at once the advantage to be gained; and taking her other hand in his continued:

"Miss Rosa, I know I am poor and unlearned, and that my parents are not what they should be. I know the neighbors look down on us—but Rosa, I am young and strong, and am going to fight my way up. Yes," he continued with clenched fists, "I am going to fight my way up to an honorable place in this world. And with just one word of encouragement from you, Rosa, my arm would be much stronger—my heart would be

lighter; and I could be content with my lot if you, dear Rosa, would just say 'God bless you' in real good earnest. I heard the preacher say that last Sunday and I thought the words sounded so good."

Rosa was a willing listener to all William said and was waiting to get a word in as he stopped short.

"Well then, God bless you," said Rosa in deep, solemn earnest

"Thank you, Miss Rosa;" and clasping both her hands more tightly, and imprinting a burning kiss on each, he bounded away and was out of sight in a moment.

Rosa stood for a few minutes gazing out into the darkness after him, then turned slowly around and went into the house; and as she shut the door, she fervently claped her hands and once more repeated the words, "God bless you."

CHAPTER VI.

"Good morning, Esquire Bloss. How does the world use you these days?"

"Good morning, Lawyer Smart; thank you, pretty well. Only a little talk occasionally about our Postmaster."

"Why what in the world do you mean, Squire, about our Postmaster? Is he getting tangled up any in business matters?"

This conversation was carried on in the office of the only hotel in Danforth, between 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart, two very worthy functioneries of the place. Lawyer Smart generally had an eye to business and was always looking up cases for litigation; and it mattered not whose ox got gored, provided he could secure a fee, however small it was. 'Squire Bloss was a dapper little fellow of rotund form and always prying

into everyone's business; and generally on good terms with those whom he considered his equals, he never acknowledged any superiors.

"I want to know if John Morehead is likely to get into a pinch. I must look after that a little. I wonder if there is a chance for a fee from some of his creditors? I heard the other day that his business affairs were not all satisfactory. 'Squire Bloss, we must look after this matter; there may be something in it."

"I tell you, Lawyer Smart, I know that John Morehead can't hold his head up much longer, for I heard Deacon Blake's wife tell Samantha Jones that she heard Manda Wells say that Mr. Morehead was not doing so well with his stock of goods as he might."

"Yes," says Lawyer Smart, "since you mentioned it I did hear that Florence makes use of money that does not belong to them. She must be kept up, you know, in her tomfoolery and buying finery. Now I'll tell you, 'Squire Bloss, let us work into one another's hands, and if John Morehead fails, we can easily get to be the assignees; or we can get a job of fixing up papers and making out mortgages, invoices or something of the kind."

"Now let us find out about this matter, Lawyer Smart," observed 'Squire Bloss. "I tell you we may be able to get something to do in the matter. Let us each find out what we can and meet here this evening and report progress."

"Agreed. Now be punctual and let us lay plans for the future."

It was very evident that John Morehead was pinched for money; and it began to be whispered in social circles that he would be compelled to make an assignment or mortgage property in order to keep his business going.

As John went home on the evening in question, he

found Florence in a fluster—everthing seemed to have gone wrong with her. He, too, was in a bad humor. Creditors were importunate about their claims.

"I tell you, Mr. Morehead, I am going to see my father. It is very singular that I can't have some money to go and see my folks when I want to."

"Why Florence, I never refused you any money when we could spare it and you was in need of it. But you must bear in mind that we are just at this time very hard up for money. There is a crash among the banks and men are failing all over the country. We must use economy if we get along in this world. Could you not wait a few months until this panic is over and then go and have a visit with your parents?"

"Mr. Morehead, if I can't have money when I want it I will find some one who will furnish me money. Do you suppose that I am going to work like a nigger all my life and get no pay for it? No, sir, Mr. Morhead! I'll see if I can not have what I want; and if you can't let me have what I need, I'll find some one that will."

"Why Florence, I don't object to you wanting to go on a visit. I am but too glad to have you go. It was only a proposition of mine to wait a little until the crash is over."

"Yes, you always have some excuse to put me off. Now I'm going; do you understand. I'm going and you can like it or not!"

As Florence passed out of the door and slammed it behind her, John Morehead thus soliloquized to himself:

"I believe Florence is getting worse and worse every day. Now she knows I am in a pinch for money, and just now of any time in the year I am the hardest up. If I could have her support in these trying times, I believe I could get safely over this hard time. But if I have to furnish her money at the present time I may

not be able to continue in business. I want her to go and see her people, and have a good time visiting around. I believe there should be unanimity between man and wife; the two should be one in purpose, one in aim and one in the welfare of the family. And if the wife does not support the husband with her counsel and advice, and second his efforts in all that pertains to the welfare of the family, then a man might work and labor forever and die a poor man at the end. A man and wife should agree, and the wife being the ministering angel, the husband should be guided by her counsel when in doubt himself—but neither a slave for the other, but a helpmate. That is scripture, and I'll stand by it. But one thing seems strange to my mind and one I have never yet been able to fathom: Florence has smiles for other men and none for me. It may be that she married the wrong—"

"Papa, mama says as how she is going to grandpa's on the first boat. Why papa, what makes you look so earnest and sad? I hope you are not going to have any trouble any more; we have had enough of that. O, I wish I could help you, papa."

John Morehead's soliloquy was cut short by Rosa coming into the room and bursting out in the manner above described.

John Morehead stooped down and imprinted a kiss on his daughter's forehead and observed as he did so:

"I fear your papa will see trouble again, Rosa. Once before I had trouble and thought that it would never come again. But if some persons were like you, Rosa, there would be no failure with me."

"Well, papa, I will do anything in the world for you. Only let me know what it is you will have me do."

"No, no, Rosa, it is not in your province to help me now. Go, my dear daughter, and tell your mother that

I will endeavor to get the money to defray her expenses to her parents."

As Mrs. Morehead's parents lived in a distant state, the expense of a trip of that kind would involve the outlay of near one hundred dollars. But by strict economy and dividing payments, John was enabled to send Florence on her way; but previous to her starting, he exacted a promise, or an agreement, from her that she would in the future be more considerate. In fact, John had become somewhat despondent and cast-down, However, he managed to keep business, to all outside appearances, going on.

That evening, 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart met at the hotel and had a talk about Morehead's affairs.

"Do you know," says 'Squire Bloss, "that I have tried very hard to find out about John's affairs, but don't make much headway. But this much I do know, that he is getting money of that Jew money lender, Gobher."

"And that is the reason he holds out so. I know that Jew will get him yet, for he knows Morehead is an honorable man and will pay his debts—and big interest, too."

"And that big interest is what will beat John Morehead," observed 'Squire Bloss.

"Well," observed Lawyer Smart, "if we can get him started down hill once, why then the wreck will have to come and we can come in for a share of the spoils in some way or other."

As the two were talking in low tones and were very earnest in what they said, they did not observe Tim Morarity lounging on a bench not far from where they were sitting, but who was enabled to catch a few words and the meaning of them; and putting this and that together he was enabled to find out the run of their conversation.

Tim was hardly able to suppress his indignation at the two gentlemen who held the conference; but biting his lips he started out, intending to inform John of what he heard. But on arriving at his house he found all abed and so deferred his mission.

After Tim left the hotel, 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart went their way; but it was the understanding that they were to keep a sharp lookout on John Morehead and his business,

As Tim went slowly along to his lodging, he thus soliloquized to himself:

"And fwat's the matter wid John, I wondher? I fear he is livin' too fast, altogether. But thin that woman of his, she'd beat ould Satan himself and give 'im all the short rows to boot. Bedad but Mr. Morehead can't prosper wid such a dead load as that woman makes. It's money, money. all the time with her. She may be an honest person—Tim Morarity will not say that she is not—but divil the bit can a man get on in this world who is tied down to a woman who has smiles for every one but her husband."

As Tim reached his lodging, he observed John Morehead walking along towards his home. Tim was the first to speak.

"And is that you, Mr. Morehead. I thought yez were in bed, for I was there this blessed minute, and the doors and windows were all shut and no one in sight."

"Why, Tim, Florence is gone to see her parents and the rest are all in bed but me, and I was just taking a little walk before retiring."

"Why, John," observed Tim, "I undherstand that yez is getting into trouble once more. I accidently overheard Lawyer Smart—the blackguard—and 'Squire Bloss, down at the hotel, saying that you were in trouble about business. Now Mr. Morehead," continued Tim,

"if the spalpeens are in earnest and tell the truth, you will have to make an assignment. Is it thrue, John?"

"Well, Tim, it is no use denying the truth. To say the least, I am in a tight place for money. I may be able to pull through, but I see no way out at present. Then there is Florence. She is very exacting in her demands and is all the time wanting money. Money is all her desire and appears to be the God of her ambition. Rosa, bless the dear child, will do everything in her power for me. She is so self-denying. It makes my heart bleed to think how patient she takes all my losses and crosses in this life. I believe, Tim, that girl was giveu to us for a solace, a comfort in our struggles. Earney is now quite a lad, but careless and unconcerned. He cannot help me any. But Tim, I shall fight manfully before I give up this time. I will try every expedient to get over the hard places and it may be that I will succeed. What was it Tim, that 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart were saying?"

"Why, Mr. Morehead, you see the spalpeens were, were, sayin' that yez wad have to make an assignment and that they would get a job of making out the papers or envoicing goods, and all that sort of things—some legal business."

"Well, Tim, I am going to do for the best, but it is all the way up hill, I assure you. I am going to have a talk with aunty. Her advice is better than all the lawyers in Christendom. Now, Tim, you will keep your ears open when you hear any one speak of my business and report to me."

"And me eyes shut. Oil do that, Mr. Morehead, don't yez fear. It's Tim Morarity that'l do it."

When John Morehead reached his house it was near midnight, and being worried and exhausted from the

day's labor, he retired to bed and was soon lost in a troubled slumber.

CHAPTER VII.

As it had been several days since Mrs. Dedcom had visited the Morehead mansion, she was especially well supplied with most everything that had transpired in Danforth for the last two weeks and a large amount of extra gossip had to be attended to, not to forget the new Presbyterian minister, Matthews by name, who had just made his debut into Danforth; and who, by the way, was a widower and a very exemplary man.

And as Mrs. Dedcom flopped herself down by the side of Florence, she began to unwind herself in a hurry, keeping up all the points.

"Now Florence," says she, "don't it beat all nature how people will talk. The word is that John will have to make an assignment; and the lawyers and justices are already commenting on the probabilities of a job. And would you believe it, Florence, our new minister bowed to me on the street to-day. I just think he is a nice man and I shall make it a point to call on him. That is perfectly right and proper to call on our minister, you know, Florence. And don't you think it right and proper that a minister should be married? I expect it would be better to have an introduction. What would you do, Florence? Would you make a formal call and introduce yourself, eh? It would not be overstepping the bounds of etiquette, eh? He is our minister you know. He certainly will not think me rude; and then there is that meddlesome thing, Jane Strong—he was talking to him, don't you think, last Sunday after church. Now Florence, what would you advise."

"Well," says Florence, "first I would find out if he had any money or was worth anything; and then I think

I would let him make the first advance—yes, and pop the question, if he wished. I could stand it if he had plenty of money."

"Well I shall not loose any time about this matter and I'm just going to let Jane know her place, the horrid old thing! A deacon's daughter ought to know better than to think of marrying a minister."

"I suppose," says Florence, "that a deacon's daughter is as good as anyone."

"Yes, but don't you know that they should not be pushing themselves in when other folks are around. Yes, and there is Mrs. Potter. She says it is highly improper for a widower, who is a minister of the gospel, to go to church with a lady who is one of the pillars of the church, and be gallanting them about to festivals and evening meetings. Bless me, Florence, don't you think the other evening Deacon Strong took Jemima Peters home from the prayer meeting and said 'cause it was so dark that Sister Peters could not see and must have some one to go with her to keep her from falling in the ditch. If people can do that then I am sure that I can call on Brother Matthews with the best of propriety. Yes and there it that horrid old thing, Polly Pil. ger, sticking herself in. I'll give her to understand that I am not going to be snubbed by such a thing as she is. Why, Florence, would you believe it, she told Deacon Baown that no minister should marry outside of the church and that, too, before me—right then and there. Well I shall make it known to Deacon Strong that I am about to connect with the church. Wouldn't that be right. Florence? You see I could be a great help at our sewing society. If I should marry Brother Matthews how every one will envy me. I am not a member of the church now, but I am going this blessed minnte to see Deacon Strong. O my, Florence, I am not going

to be tied down to one man. I don't believe that a woman was made for a slave—no, I'll be a slave for no one. Let us see, Florence; if I should marry Brother Matthews I would be a minister's wife, wouldn't I? But see then, a minister's wife should be a very plain dressed person. But I'll see about that. I will inform Brother Matthews that I'm to have a seal-skin sack, yes and a moreantique dress, and a new hood, and a brosha shawl, and, and, a—"

"My, Mrs. Dedcom, don't count chickens before they are hatched," says Florence. "But you are right about not being a slave, Mrs. Dedcom. Don't be a slave for anyone, nor marry anyone for money. Just show them that women are independent."

And Florence was about to continue, when Mrs. Dedcom rose to her feet in great trepidation and exclaimed:

"Lordy, if there don't come Mr.—I mean Brother Matthews. O my, what shall I do! O my hair—sakes alive just look at it, Florence, aud my dress—see the spots on it! O Lordy, what shall I do if Brother Matthews sees it?"

"Stop, Mrs. Dedcom," says Florence, "don't make yourself ridiculous. Let the mlnister come if he wants to. He wont hurt us."

"Well yes, Florence, but you must just let me talk to him myself. There he knocks. Come in Brother Mat thews," says Mrs. Dedcom. "O my, it should have been Florence to say come in! Well, I'll talk to him anyway."

As Mr. Matthews entered he bowed to both Mrs. Dedcom and Florence, and after passing the compliments of the day, took the proffered chair. As he did so, he announced that he was soliciting aid for the foreign missions and was desirous of obtaining what funds that could be raised in his branch of the church, to be

forwarded to the missions in the South Sea Islands. At the mention of his business, Mrs, Dedcom took the reins of the subject out of Brother Matthews' hands and launched forth.

"Brother Matthews, it is a shame we don't do more for those poor, benighted people who are suffering for clothing and food; and there are the poor children who are entirely naked. Aint that too horrid, Brother Matthews?"

Brother Matthews started in to explain that their country was a warm country, but what they stood in need of was the gospel. But Mrs. Dedcom cut him short at the word warm and chimed in.

"Yes, Brother Matthews—I always call good Christian people brother," she added by way of parenthesis. "I know you will pardon my seeming boldness. But as I was going to say, Brother Matthews, we should be more warm-hearted (laying stress on the word 'warm'); we should not be so cold in our affections; we should be more congenial in our relations with each other, and—don't you think so, Brother Matthews? Yes we cerainly should give something to the heathens—the poor unfortunate things, how do they ever live in such a hot country, and is it a fact, Brother Matthews, that they eat one another up? Aint that horrid?"

"And that is what we want to teach them—to obey the laws of God and respect the marriage relations," Mr. Matthews was going to add, but was again cut short by Mrs. Dedcom, at the word "marriage," and again took the word out of the minister's mouth and continued:

"Yes I'd have them learn to get married. That you know, Brother Matthews, is a direct command of Divinity. Yes, our Government should send a man-of-war over and compel the heathen to marry. And they

do say that them chief or head men have so many wives. Aint that horrid, Brother Matthews? It would not be so bad if the women had the same privilege of having as many men—excuse me, Brother Matthews, but I was letting my thoughts run away. But Brother Matteews, don't you think that the married state is the most happy?"

At this point in the conversation, Florence, who had been an unwilling listener, bowed to Mr. Matthews and excusing herself, passed out and left the other two to conclude the interview. As she left the room, Mrs. Dedcom pushed her conversation with the minister afresh.

"Now Brother Matthews, I'm a lone widow and full of sorrows, and you are left alone in the world; and as you was saying, the heathen ought to be educated. I am willing to do my part. But really, Brother Mat thews, don't you think that persons could enjoy their-selves much better in the matrimonial state and be more happy?"

"Well, Mrs. Dedcom," replies Mr. Matthews, "that depends on the kind of state the matrimonial state makes it."

"O, yes, dear Brother Matthews," going up to him and kindly caressing him, "you are a poor lone widow-er in the world and have no one to care for you; but there is one who cares for you—yes, Brother Matthews, there is one who does—"

'What is the matter with you women? I came here—"

"Yes I know you came here—to see me, didn't you? Yes, I am your long lost affinity."

"Get out with your affinity," yelled Mr. Matthews, "I came here to solicit a—"

"Yes, I know you did," broke in Mrs. Dedcom once

more. "Yes, you came to solicit my hand; but you treat me so cruelly that I wont have anything to say to you anymore."

"Madam, you must be aware that a minister of the gospel must be about the business of the church. I bid you good day, madam."

At this, Mr. Matthews reached for the door knob, and as he attempted to pass out, Mrs. Dedcom stepped in front of him and in a rage, said:

"Mr. Matthews, you are a brute, and I shall report you to the deacons of the church for being here alone with a lone widow!"

At this last remark, Mr. Matthews jerked the door open and passed out, slamming it shut behind him. As he did so, Mrs. Dedcom flopped herself down in a chair and thus soliloquized:

"Well, if that is the way I'm to be treated by our minister—I don't mean our minister; I say, that one you call a minister—then I reckon he'll not get much for the heathen out of me. I reckon he'll go and see that horrid old thing, Jane Strong. Well, let him go. I'll see to it that the deacons know how he was here with me all alone—and me a lone widow! Yes, I'll fix him and let him know not to trifle with a lone widow's feelings in such a manner. Heathens—yes, he is a heatheu himself. High ho, well, well! I'm going this blessed minute to Deacon Strong's. I'll let 'em know not to trifle with me—a poor, lone, desolate widow."

When Mr. Matthews was gone, Florence re-entered the room and seating herself beside Mrs. Dedcom, observed to her that she hoped she had made a smash on the minister; and then began her own complaint, observing to Mrs. Dedcom that she would on the morrow leave the place and go on her journey to see her folks.

"John Morehead can stay here if he wants to, but he

has no money—is broke up; and I suppose I'm to be a slave all life. What is a man for, anyway, if he can't take care of his wife and children? And I've got to have money, yes, plenty of money, too."

This was said partly by soliloquizing and party to Mrs. Dedcom; and as the two women rose to their feet, their was a slamming of doors through the house.

On the morrow Florence departed from her home, leaving her children behind. She seemed to have ne regrets about doing so.

As she had observed to Mrs. Dedcom, her husband was about broke up a second time; had no money or means; had strained his already tottering credit in order to get money for his wife to go on her journey. To the reader, let it be said, would it not have been to the credit of Mrs. Florence Morehead if she had stayed with her husband in the hour of his sore need and assisted him, if in no other way, with her counsel and advice—nay more, with a kindly smile and a word of encouragement; and a "God bless you, I will go where you go; your lot shall be my lot, and whithersoever thou diest, there I will die also."

But she was not the woman to face misfortune with her husband.

CHAPTER VIII.

In our last account of John Morehead, we left him in bed at his own dwelling, in a troubled sleep. When he awoke next morning, and dressed himself for breakfast and for the days labors, it was late in the day. But after taking a walk and a cup of coffee for breakfast he felt considerably refreshed.

On going down town, his mind was over-run with the store duties he felt bound to perform. Some times his heart would almost fail him, but then he would brace up

again and resolve to face the storm. That there were some sharpers on his track and his case presented a shining mark for the human vultures to feed themselves on, he had no doubt.

As he went along, he was joined by Tim; but as he was to go and counsel with aunty, he turned back and found her in the sitting room in deep thought, working with her knitting.

"Well, aunty," says John on entering the room, 'it seems that I am to become a bankrupt once more, and it is so hard to have to give up again; but everything seems to work against me. It is no use to fight against fate. What shall I do, aunty?"

"Well, John," replies aunty, "thee must always observe one thing, and that is to act honorable with all men. Do unto others and thy neighbors as thee would they should do unto thee. This is the Savior's commandent. On this hang all the laws and prophets. But I came near forgetting, John, that the first great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy might, main and strength.' And then comes in the other—"

"Well, auntie," replies John, "you can beat me quoting scripture and I gness you must sight with them 'thees' and 'thous' and 'thys.' One thing I am sure of and that is, I want to do what is right. Yes. and I will do what is right. I know that is good Quaker doctrine, aunty, eh?"

"Yes, John, thee is right. Tho' the Heavens do fall, do right."

"Well, auntie, then the best thing for me to do is to make an assignment and treat all my creditors alike. And if there is not enough to pay in full, then pay pro rata. That is the best I can do under the circumstances. And I'll write it over my store door tomor-

row morning, 'Do Right.' Yes, and John Morehead will do what is right if the Heavens do fali aud the sun, moon and stars with it."

"Yes and Tim Morarity will back yez up wid me shelalah to boot and sthand til yez back to kape the murdthren spalpeens away to moind their oin business.'.

Although Tim had been cautioned by John to keep a sharp lookout on 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart, he had became so interested in John Morehead's welfare that he had followed him back to his house and was a silent and unobserved listener to the conversation between John and aunty. And when the interview was ended and he had heard the of John's, he could contain himself no longer and slipped in at the door without being observed by either John or aunty, began to give vent to his feelings as above stated.

As John turned around, he observed Tim standing there inside the door with a big shelalah under his arm. he thus addressed him:

"Why Tim, I thought you were looking out for them fellows I told you to watch."

"Bedad, and haven't I, tho'; and is it Tim Morarity that would betray his trust? Divil the bit; and moind yez that. Oi was afther thim slippery fellows and kapin a mink's eye on their law movements."

"Well, Tim, did you learn anything about 'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart?"

"The houly Vergin and the blessen saints protect yez, Mr. Morehead; and that is fwat I was jist goin' to spake till yez about. Why you see the sheriff is in town and he says that he has ordhers to shut Mr. Morehead's store up."

"Well, if that is the case," says John, "then I will at once make out the papers and name my assignee. You

stay here, Tim, with aunty, and I will go and do the thing at once. I will do—"

He did not finish the words, for he was confronted on the threshold of his door by 'Squire Bloss, Lawyer Smart and the sheriff.

"Hello," says 'Squire Bloss; "Hello," says John.

"Mr. Morehead, Lawyer Smart and myself have come over to offer you our help. You know," says 'Squire Bloss, hesitating.

"You see," says Lawyer Smart, "I suppose it is no use denying the fact, Mr. Morehead. You are about to be closed up by the sheriff."

"Well, what can't be cured must be endured," says John. "I am just starting out to make an assignment; and I'm going to do right in this case and treat every one alike, who are my creditors."

"That is just what I advise," says 'Squire Bloss.

"Yes, Mr. Morehead," chimed in Lawyer Smart, "the best thing to do is to make an assignment. You can make me your assignee and your creditors will not bother you any more. I can take charge of your business. Make out your papers to me. 'Squire Bloss here can acknowledge them, and if you make over any real estate, he can acknowledge the transfers in a proper manner."

"Yes, Mr. Morehead," says 'Squire Bloss, "I have done a considerable amount of this kind of business and if you will just come over to my office we will fix up the matter in a short time."

"You know, Mr. Morehad," says Lawyer Smart, "that when an assignment is made, that stops all law proceedings and we have ninety days to report in, and if we don't take an account of everything no one will be the wiser in regard to it."

"Yes, that's so," says 'Squire Bloss. "We can report

the matter as being entirely bankrupt; the stock that you have now on hands we can say did not turn out well and pay the expense of the assignment. And you can take a part and we a part, and let the creditors go to the devil. Mr. Smart, that's the way to fix these matters up; don't you think so, too, Mr. Morehead?"

John Morehead listened to the proposals and arguments of the two men in silence. He had determined to do what was right about the matter from the first. But the talk of the two men did not meet with his views of the way the business should be done. However, it was all new to him, and he was willing to do and go according to the advice of his friends; and when 'Squire Bloss spoke about the way to conduct an assignment, and that most of the goods could be smuggled away, John Morehead wavered and began to see a chance to get away from his creditors without turning out all of his effects. Yes, John Morehead wavered and staggered under the idea advanced by the two legal gentlemen; but thanks be to his honor, it was only for a few minutes.

He saw the gulf into which he would be plunged; the disgrace that would be sure to follow a discovery; and then he roused himself up from his seeming lethargy.

"No, gentlemen, John Morehead will do nothing you propose. I have set my stake and if I can find an honest man to make an assignee of, I will do so; if not, then the sheriff will proceed."

And as he spoke these words, he waved the men back and passed out.

On the day following, John Morehead's store was closed up by his creditors; as no one could be found to take the place of assignee, this was the inevitable. He procured a small building close by on the same street to

put the Postoffice in, and let the sharks devour the remains of his stock of merchandise.

CHAPTER IX.

"Come here, Erney," says Rosa, "and let us play keeping store. You know papa keeps store. You be storekeeper and papa and I will come in and buy goods of you."

"No, no," says Erney, "that is not the way. We must first buy the goods before we can sell them. Yes, aud pay for them, too. Now I'll go and buy a stock of goods and bring them here, and then you be my customer. That is the way papa does and the people come in and buy."

"Well, what shall we do when the man comes in and wants his pay for the goods?" says Rosa. "Have you got the money to buy with, Erney?"

"No," says Erney. "Don't papa buy on tick and I can do so, too. That is the way papa does."

"Well, but pay-day comes by and by, you know, Erney."

"Well. I can make an assignment," says Erney; "that is the way papa and other merchants does."

"O my, Erney, that don't seem right—'taint right either, for just yesterday there was a man who came to papa's store and said he must have his pay for what goods he sold to papa; and papa looked so bad cause he told the man he had no money to pay him. Then the man went off mad and said he would sue papa. O, Erney, I felt so bad! I tell you, Erney, we must help papa to pay the man."

"Why Rosa, we aint got any money. What can we do?"

"Why," says Rosa, "I will sell my big doll and Jim the canary; and you can sell your sled and rocking

horse, and we can help papa, can't we? Yonder comes papa now, Erney. Let us do what we can."

As John Morehead reached his home, the children ceased and he was met by Rosa at the door. She saw trouble on her father's face at once, in fact, she had for several days observed it, but forebore to say anything to hurt her father's feelings, well knowing that he was in trouble about his business again.

"Why papa, what makes you look so bad? Have the officers closed you out again? I heard so this morning. Dear papa, why do you take so much trouble about it? They can't take you and put you in jail, can they? Let them take the goods and everything else. I don't like the looks of them men who were talking to you this morning down at the store. Do they mean to do right, papa? If I could only help you in some way—it is money you need, dear papa, I know it. If you only had money to pay those creditors off, then you would be all right wouldn't you, dear papa?"

"Yes, my dear child, there is the trouble. If I only had some money to bridge me over a hard place I believe I could get through: but fate seems ugainst me, Rosa."

"Well, papa, I could help you, I know I could. I could sell my doll, and my canary and the cage. I could do this, dear papa, and Erney would sell his rocking horse and sled, and we could get a lot of money that way; and then, papa, we could pay what you owe and then we would all be so happy once more."

"My dear child, don't talk so; it breaks my heart to hear you talk that way. I will go and work by days work—yes, I will lay in jail, before you, my dear child, shall be deprived of one of your play things."

"Why, papa, it only gives me pain to see you in trouble; and if Erney and I sell our play things and

help you out, dear papa, it is our will and pleasure to do so."

"O my dear child, you know not of what you talk. You must not, dear Rosa, think of selling your doll and canary for my benefit. No, no, Rosa, it is my province to make you, my dear children, happy in this world. You break my heart, now almost ready to burst with misfortune; no, no!"

"Why papa, what makes you shed tears? I will and can do for you--only let me know what it is."

John Morehead had faced death in a hundred ways—had been in battle, where the roar of cannon and rattle of musketry was deafening to his ears; where the dead and dying lay thick on the ground; and he had never been weak or faint hearted before; but when his dear Rosa had proposed to give up all her play things, and for his benefit, he could stand it no longer—he broke down and could only moan piteously. For several minutes he remained silent, as the tears trickled down his cheeks; and as he stood there holding his dear children by the hands, a mighty struggle was going on in his hreast.

The struggle was, should he go, and leave his family —his dear children,—to some town, country, or place, where he could mend his fortunes; or should he stay with his family and worry along as best he could?

If no one could be found who was honest enough to be his assignee and conduct his business in an honest and equitable manner, then the sheriff and creditors could proceed. Of one thing he determined, that was he would never again engage in the mercantile business. For a more definite decision, he deferred until the morrow. So embracing his dear children and commending them to God, he led them to the doors of their sleeping apartments and once more sought his own bed.

'Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart held a council after Mr. Morehead had dismissed them at his door. Their talk ran in this wise:

"I tell you, squire," says Lawyer Smart, "John need not hold his head up so high. He is broke and he pretends to be honest with it."

"Well, you see," says 'Squire Bloss, "we have got him in our clutches, anyway. The notes will be put in my hands for collection and I can have a double purchase on him. His creditors will not expect much and John will come to it and smuggle. He'll come to it, Mr. Smart—you mark my words."

"Well, I am with you, 'squire. He can't hold his head so high and be a dead broke man. Such fellows generally come down a notch or two. We will come at him again,"

"I'll tell you what we might do," says 'Squire Bloss. "We can—"

Here the conversation was broken off by the appearance of Tim.

On the morrow John Morehead was up very early and as he began to revolve in his mind what was best to do, there came a rap at the door. He answered to the rap, and who should make his appearance but J. Gobher, the Jew money lender. John bade him come in and be seated.

"Vel, Meester Morehead, I hear you haf been in drouble a ledle. How ish dot mit you? You vant some monish to help you true mit der hard blace, eh?" observed the Jew, as he seated himself in a chair.

"Well, Mr. Gobher, it is no use denying the fact. I am in a hard place and in all probability will lose all I huve unless some miracle interferes to save me."

"Vel den I loan you dose monish. You gif me goot security. Vot interest you bay me for dat monish?"

"Why, Mr. Gobher, I thank you kindly for your proffered aid. I am thinking that I shall go to some place better than this to mend my shattered fortune. I can't pay any big interest, Mr. Gobher, but suppose I can pay the lawful interest."

"I lifs by my monish und you bay me dot interest I loan you der monish. You go on mit der pizness und you make dem all back again."

"Well how much will you charge me." says John, "for say one thousand dollars for one year?"

"Not more as dree per cent. a mond und you bay der interest in adwance. Und den you gif me mortgage for de brinciple, und den you makes monish on der pizness."

Again John Morehead faltered and wavered for a few minutes—whether he should take the Jew's money or not; but it was only for a few minutes, and rousing up, he firmly, but politely, informed Mr. Gobher that he could not accept his offer.

"But," interposed Mr. Gobher, "I haf der monish und I lend him to you, Meester Morehead. I dake der interest und nefer mind der brinciple. You go mit me to Mexico und I youst digs him oup from der grount mit —vat you dinks of dat speculation, eh?"

A new idea broke into John's brain, at the mention of going to Mexico. Mr. Gobher told him in a former chapter that he had money buried there in the outskirts of the town of Monterey, and now he thought he saw a chance offered to get some money by going after it. His mind was made up at once. He proposed to Mr. Gobher that he would accompany him to the place where his treasure was buried and assist in digging it up. Accordingly a bargain was struck and all the preliminaries were mapped out and a day fixed on to start on their journey.

As Mr. Gobher left the house, John proceeded to the

Postoffice and found a letter from Florence. Hastily breaking it open, he glanced over its contents. It was the same old story: "Send me some money and be sure and send enough—I have got to have plenty," the letter read.

After perusing it carefully, John quietly folded it and placing it in his pocket, he thus mused to himself:

"Yes, Florence wants money. She certainly knows my straightened circumstances. Well I will send her what I can. I will then pack my valise and place my children under the care of aunty and Tim, and at once be off for Mexico with Mr. Gobher. I will brave any danger for my dear children and as for Florence, when she returns, she will be cared for. If she was here now she perhaps would object to my going with that Dutchman and money lender; but I am fully armed and have made up my mind that Florence has married the wrong man, or I have married the wrong woman."

On the morrow John Morehead and Mr. J. Gobher started on their journey to Mexico and in due time arrived at Monterey, their place of destination. It is however proper to state that before starting John, as nsual, held a council with aunty.

"It does seem to me," says aunty, "that thee is nearing the third and last yellow ball I saw in my dream. Thee got apast the first and second, or nearly so, Now this one is the last, and may the good Lord help thee John. I will pray for thee, that thou shalt overcome all difficulties and it is one of our tenets, that is, to make money if thee can, John."

"Well, aunty, to your care I commit my dear children until Florence comes. In fact, I know they are better cared for by you, dear aunty, than if some one else had them. I do not want to bid them good bye. It will only give me fresh pain, as well as them. I am going

on a dangerous trip. Yes, aunty, I go down among the Greasers, Mexicans, who are treacherous, and them brigands are ever ready to pounce on anyone whom they suspect of having money. But, aunty, I shall have nothing to fear in that direction as I am not burdened with money. I know I go with your blessing for my success, and if Gobher, the Jew, tells the truth, I shall be able to come back with a good sum of mouey."

We follow now our two friends, John Morehead and Gobher, to the city of Monterey, in Mexico, where we find them quartered in a heicinda, or farm house, just outside the walls that surround it.

This was thought best by Mr. Gobher, as they would be more free to come and go without molestation, as there were police in the city who made it a business to look after all strangers who could not be identified at once. And it was the main part of their business to keep their intentions to themselves. But as Gobher spoke Spanish very well, he could always throw off suspicion as to their real business.

What the two men had agreed on was to, as secretly as possible, search for the buried treasure that Gobher had deposited, well knowing that if the Greasers found out their real business it became more dangerous for them to prosecute their search for the hidden treasure.

CHAPTER X.

The reader will bear in mind that after the war closed and the business of the country became more settled, Quag left the home of John Morehead and started south in search of, as she termed it, "de ole man." Slavery having been abolished, she could travel without fear of being molested, as was not the case in former years. However, it was several years before the darkies could

get at the full import of the meaning of "a freeman." Some of the old trustworthy ones who were in the confidence of their masters were loth to acknowledge the new order of things.

But Quag being a good cook and well versed in the domestic duties generally, could readily obtain employment anywhere. Her first thought on leaving the Moreheads was to get employment on a south bound steamer on the Mississippi River. She, however, found this a little difficult, as steamboat men were a little shy about engaging persons of no recommendation. Quag, however, managed to enlist the sympathies of an old steamboat man by the name of Henderson—he was always known by the name of "Bill" Henderson—who procured her a berth as chambermaid on a Southern steamer. This was what Quag had long wished for, and she could hardly realize that she was a free woman and earning wages; and her joy had no bounds when she found that the steamer would continue down the river as far as Memphis, Tenn., where it would lay by for several days in order to take on an up-river cargo.

She clung to the hope that she would be enabled to find her old man down there, as the war was over and he would be apt to seek employment in some of those large river towns.

After the steamer had received her cargo for the return trip, Quag had been urged to go back with the crew. However, she had only engaged for the trip to Memphis; and as the time drew nigh for the steamer's departure, her old friend Henderson importuned her to make the return trip. He found her sitting on the high bank, gazing off down the river with a vacant stare.

"No tank you, Massa Henderson," she said, in reply to his earnest request. "I know you is a good man, but massa, I jes can't go back norf; my heart says no. It

jes seems I want to see my old man—dat I mus see him, or dis poor ole heart will break. Dat is certain, Massa Henderson. De Lawd bress you, massa; I nose yese is a good man. But if I doan get to see my ole man, I no I'll jes die. Done you like your ole woman, massa? If yese is a good man, I nose ye do. Den, Massa Henderson, ye nose dat de wah is now over and done, and me and my ole man can lib like white folks. Now, Massa Henderson, aint dat so?"

As Quag spoke these last words, tears came in her eyes and the old steamboat man's stern heart was softened; and extending his hand to Quag, he replied:

"Well, Quag, you are right. Your race has been down-trodden for a long time and now there is a chance for you to better your condition. Go, Quag, go; and may God bless you and help you to find the 'ole man!'"

And as he turned away, a large tear coursed its way down his sun-browned cheek. Hastily brushing away the watery emblem, he stepped aboard the boat and was in a few minutes steaming up the river.

Quag watched the boat—gazing with a vacant stare until lost to sight by the sinuosities of the river. Then falling on her knees, she poured forth her soul in prayer—that the good Lord would preserve her and enable her to find her "ole man." That prayer was uncouth in words, but it came from the heart.

As she arose, she started away to see if she could get some employment on a south bound steamer. She had heard of a gang of negroes who had shipped south to work on some railroad; and embracing the first opportunity, she again shipped on board of a New Orleans steamer and in due time arrived in the Crescent City.

Again and again she made inquiry of anyone and everyone who she thought could give her information of her "ole man." But the further south she went the

more unkind and brutal treatment she received. She worked at times to procure food and clothing, and would then continue her search.

Becoming more disheartened every day, she finally joined a mule train bound for the Brazos River, hoping to get some information in that direction of the whereabouts of her husband. The country at that time in the south, and more particularly west of the Mississippi River, was in a state of anarchy. Bands of lawless refugees and brigands held the better class of the inhabitants in terror most of the time.

The train that Quag had joined contained not only valuable merchandise for the trade, but a considerable amount of money. And it proved a very tempting bite for marauders, for on the fourth day out the whole train was captured and taken over into Mexico, where those who could pay their ransom were set at liberty. But Quag was retained by the band to do servile work.

The money and stock of merchandise were divided up among the members of the gang. The rendezvous was some twenty miles north of the town of Monterey in Mexico.

CHAPTER XI.

Again the reader is called to a former chapter where William Ramble had left the village of Danforth to seek his fortune.

He had heard of good chances in the south, where fortunes were made, and his thoughts and desires naturally turned that way; but his first aim was to get to work in some high school and procure a good education. This was the first great object and one that must be attended to before any other thought could be entertained.

Procuring employment as a newsboy on a popular

railroad running south, he gradually worked his way to St. Louis. In that large city he was for a time at a loss to know which way to direct his steps. He was, in fact, about to be taken up as a vagrant by the police, when a very kind and benevolent old gentleman took him in charge and learning the boy's desires, took him home with him to Mt. Vernon, Ill., where he procured a berth for him to do chores for his schooling.

Will Ramble never would give his benefactor any account of his nativity or parentage and when pressed closely to tell, would evade the answer by saying that his relations lived away up north.

In the course of six months he had made such rapid advances in his studies that he won the admiration of most of the inmates of the school. However, he became so eager to get at some employment in order to earn money that in about a year after entering the school, he bid good bye to his old benefactor and once more started out in the world to make his fortune.

Traveling south in the hopes of finding a situation, he reached the city of Memphis, Tenn. Here his funds gave out and he was left to do the best he could. Finally he secured a position in a large wholesale establishment as a bill clerk. Entering upon his duties with a hearty good will, he used his best endeavors to get the good will of his employers.

He had not been in this position long, when one day an up-river steamer landed at the wharf and commenced to discharge her cargo. William was sent down to the landing to look after some freight, when to his great surprise he saw Tim on board as a deckhand. Recognizing him at once, he went up to Tim and shaking his hand, asked after the folks at Danforth.

After Tim got over his surprise, he let off an extra load of the real, genuine Irish.

"Well, well, me by, may the Saints take care of yeze. But how in the name of St. Patrick did yeze git here? Who in the name of Moses wad have thought of the likes of yeze bein' away down here among the Ku-Klux? Why, me by, them fellers will take your life in a twinkling of a mouse's eye. Well, be the Houly Mither, O Moses, whode iver thought of sein a Ramble down here, anyhow?"

William was perhaps more astonished than Tim, for he supposed that he never would see anyone from his native town so far away from home.

"Well. Tim," replies he, after getting over his surprise, "I left home and friends to seek or make my fortune."

He then proceeded to give him in as few words as possible his experience since leaving home.

But he was more surprised on learning Tim's business down south, which is given here in his own language:

"I'l tell yeze, me by," Tim commenced, "Do yeze know that John Morehead has gone to Mexico or the divil's own land, I'm thinking, as the soger bys call it? And he left me to look after things at home, sayen as how he'd be back wid a pile o' shiners and tuck wid him the Jew money-lender, and begorra he is the man as I don't like. So you see Tim Morarity is not the one to see as foine a man as John Morehead be kilt and scalped by them Greaser divils down there, and its meself that's goin' to hunt him up and see as no harm comes to him. Bad luck to thim murdthern thaves who wad cut a man's throat as soon as to eat a sandwitch."

"Did you leave Moreheads to hunt up John," observed William, as Tim stopped for want of breath. "O my, but if you are going all the way to Mexico you have a long journey before you."

"Niver moind that," says Tim. "Do you suppose I

could sthay at home and not know what had become of John? No, divil the bit. I leave this boat here and take the next one south."

And Tim was true to his woad, for the first Orleans steamer he found at the wharf he shipped as a deck hand, bound to hunt up the man he loved so well. In due time he landed at New Orleans, where after getting what information he could respecting the route to old Monterey, in Mexico, he set about contriving some way whereby he could make the trip.

He finally concluded to take a vessel bound for Brownsville and go that way. His main hope was to get out to Monterey by some private conveyance. Accordingly, he shipped on board a trading vessel loaded with merchandise, bound for Brownsville and beyond. Tim being a fresh water sailor, did not take very readily to the salt sea, for he was dubbed a fresh water lobster by the old salts; and had it not been for his determined will he would have succumbed to the fearful sea sickness prevailing on all gulf sailing vessels. But Tim stuck to his crackers and cheese, and in due time arrived at his destination.

The next move was to get to Monterey, if possible. Learning that a mule train was making for the interior, Tim lost no time in finding out the destination of it; but what was his disappointment when he learned that it was going in a contrary direction from the one he wished to go. But nothing daunted, Tim persevered in his inquiry and was finally rewarded by securing a passage with some native muleteers going out in the interior for mineral.

It was pretty hard work for Tim to understand the Greasers at first, but he soon made his wants known and had but little trouble on the route.

For several days the traveling on the route was some-

what monotonous, but when they began to enter the mountains, the Mexicans in charge of the train were continually on the alert and seemed to be in dread of some misfortune by robbers or banditti.

Tim enjoyed the fear of the muleteers very much and declared that he "wud jist like to ile up his jints a little in a bit of a row or of a real Irish wake as he would call it." Tim's curiosity was gratified, for on the third day after entering the mountains a band of guerrillas pounced down on the train and demanded an immediate surrender. Tim, after his first surprise, showed fight and urged the muleteers not to give in to the "murdthern thaves."

Pop! pop! went the pistols of the brigands, one ball just grazing Tim's cheek. "Och, be the powers above us, its fight yeze are afther' ye divils; and its Tim Morarity as will give yeze the best out of five. Come on you Greaser divils." And Tim being well armed, made such a good use of his weapons that the band of outlaws were completely taken aback. However, seeing only one who offered fight, they closed in on the muleteers and overpowered them.

But Tim they did not get. He was not to be taken, but bounding away among the chaparal, he succeeded in hiding himself completely from the robbers. He lay perfectly still until near night, knowing that the robbers would be looking for him; but a new danger arose. Tim began to feel the demand of appetite, and what to do he did not know. Among the mountains in a strange land, he had no means of knowing how to continue his journey; but Tim had a brave heart within his breast, and he determined to sell his life as dear as possible.

Advancing carefully to the road, he cautiously peered first in one direction and then in the other, and finding no one in sight Tim concluded to follow the road, as he

supposed that they were going in the morning.

However, he became very hungry and determined to get some food at all hazards. There were heicindas along the mountain roads at long intervals and Tim determined to seek one of these if possible. But darkness coming on so bad, he could only grope his way as best he could. It was getting late in the night and he was getting well nigh exhausted. At length he sat down on a small lump of something beside the road, it being so dark he could not tell what it was. He commenced to upbraid himself in this wise:

"O why did I come away down here among these hathens—bad luck to thim—to be wanderthren about loike a crazy mon in the wild mountains of this, Satan's own land? It's near stharved I am. O Tim Morarity, its bether ye niver left the Green Isle, than be poken about here in the dark loike a hungry fox chased by the hounds! But it is better this way than be taken by thim ugly looken, thaven guerrillas. Bad luck to thim; they belong to ould Nick himself. But it's for John Morehead that I'm here, and bedad but Tim 'll make the best of it."

While he was sitting there, he thought he saw a light off in the woods somewhere near the course he supposed he was traveling. Tim strained his organs of vision in the direction for some time and was rewarded for his vigilance by observing a bright light about a mile away, and his first impulse was to go at once and seek food and shelter. But then again, supposing it was a camp of guerrillas or brigands? Better not be too fast.

However, Tim at once set off in the direction of the light, but had not proceeded far when to his surprise he found that he was out of any road. Still he pressed on, but as he did so he concluded to reconnoiter a little and see what was in store for him. He had approached to

within a short distance of where he last saw the light and then began to reconnoiter.

He heard the sound of voices, but could not determine from whence the sound proceeded, owing to the darkness. No house or building of any kind could be seen, still he thought he saw the outlines of a low shed or building. Becoming more bold, he advanced further until he could discern the outlines of a man pacing too and fro close to the building or whatever it was.

Watching intently for a while, all at once a bright light flashed out from the shanty and in a moment more a negro wench came out with a light in her hand and began to address the man on duty; and as the light fell on her countenance, "Houly Mither, O Moses!" Tim came very near yelling at the top of his voice. Then again he was about to rush up and make himself known to Quag, for it was she that Tim recognized, and was about to put this resolve into practice. Then taking another thought, he stopped and began to consider. A thousand thoughts were passing through his brain.

He thus kept hesitating, uncertain what to do. What if it should be a den of brigands or guerrillas or robbers? He would not venture up. But then in the name of all the saints how did Quag come there? A few moments of uncertain hesitancy and he concluded to beat a hasty retreat, and turned around to put his decision into execution at once. But alas for poor Tim, the first step he took caused the snapping of a dry pine stick, which at once alarmed the sentinel as well as a large dog. The guard commanded him to halt and at the same time the dog began to yelp and bark in a boisterous manner; and tearing loose from his moorings, he came with mouth extended wide, showing a murderous set of teeth.

Tim was just ready to bound away, when a treachor-

ous vine caught his foot and he tripped and fell headlong. Before he could recover, both the sentinel and dog were upon him. Tim had taken care to provide himself with a stout manceneta club (a species of low hard wood that grows in Mexico) and was determined to fight it out "wid his shelalah," as he called his weapon. But on seeing others come out of the shanty aud the guard bringing his gun up to his shoulder, he commanded *Noi*, when Tim thought that discretion would be the better part of valor and threw down his club, and then up went his arms in token of surrender.

Biono por agy aays the brigand, for it was one of the gang which was quartered there. Tim thought he would try a little diplomacy on his captor and thus began:

"Be the powers above us, fwat yeze want of a poor Irish-American? I'm a man as got niver a cint in the wide worruld; but I'm an honorable member of St. Patrick's church, and if yeze is a thrue Catholic ye'l let me off. Sure an wasent I in Mexico a fitin fur Santa Anna? How can yeze carry a poor mon off who is born on the soil of North America free, to be a prisoner and stharve?"

But Tim might have talked to the moon or North star as to talk to the brigand, for neither could understand the other. The guard and his dog marched Tim right into the den of the banditti. Tim thought it best not to be recognized by Quag and was therefore on the alert to give her to understand that she must not know him. These thoughts rushed through his brain like a whirlwind and when the guard marched him into the midst of the band in their den he hid his face.

Quag was just ready to cry out on beholding him, but Tim, quickly divining her motive, put his finger on his lip and sternly shook his head, and Quag divining his wants, kept still and said nothing, though she afterwards

remarked that it was "so mitey hard to keep from talkin'." Tim was seated in the midst of the band and his money was demanded, and if he had no money then the name and residence of his relatives or friends. This was demanded by them in order to get a ransom.

Tim gave the name of John Morehead as his best friend and as for his whereabouts he was unable to tell. A messenger was at once dispatched by the leader to Monterey to post a letter to John Morehead, to inform him of his friend being a prisoner and that a price was set on him, and if not paid, death would be the doom of the prisoner.

The reader will at once conclude, that this same band of outlaws was the one that had captured the train in which Quag was traveling.

CHAPTER XI.

Again the reader is called to John Morehead and Gobher. In a former chapter they were at Monterey preparing to search for the hidden treasure.

After they had been settled in their quarters about ten days, during which time they had made the impression that they were engaged in buying mustang ponies for the northern trade, Morehead became so eager to be at the main business of the trip that he could not delay any longer. Having procured some small picks and crows, on the evening of the tenth day they concluded to make a trial and see if the hidden treasure was still where Gobher had left it.

After it began to get dusk, the two proceeded to the supposed place and commenced to make an excavation. The exact spot where Gobher buried his treasure was not easily determined; but it was on the south side of the Saltillo road as it led out of the gate on the west of the city. He had described the place as behind a big

bowlder in a clump of chaparal and had made a hole in the gravelly earth about two feet deep and put it in a tin box, then enclosed it in a rough box made of monceneta wood.

As they began to prospect for the place, John Morehead observed that Gobher was on the lookout all the time, which caused John to inquire into the cause of his being on the alert so much. Gobher explained:

"You see, Meester Morehead, dese Spanish Greasers are some tarm sharp, any dime (vat you call him in Anglesh?) teacheres."

"Treacherous," suggested John.

"Yese, dats vat you call him. Shoot one in de back before you see him. Youst what you call him, right—dreacherous."

"Well, Gobher," says John, "I don't think there is any danger here now."

"You pet your poots, eh. You see dat feller dere behind dat rock?"

John turned his head in the direction of Gobher's finger and just caught the glimpse of a man as some person glided swiftly behind the big bowlder and out of sight.

"Tam hell!" exclaimed Gobher. "Come—no use, we must go and come back some dark night. Tam, hell! Greasers dey youst rob a fella gwick, I del you."

So saying, Gobher took Morehead by the arm and the two went back a circuitous route to the heicinda, neither one speaking until safe in their room and the doors locked. Morehead was the first to speak.

"What do you mean, Mr. Gohher? I could fight a whole regiment of such men as these Mexicans. What did we leave for before we got down to business? That man you saw was only one and we were two and could

have soon finished him, got the money and left before he could have raised the alarm."

"I dels you no, Mr. Morehead. Dese old stone valls haf ears and tink, too, somdimes. No, no, Mr. Morehead, dot wont do to fight now. Somdimes maybe it vill do to fite a ledle. You see, Mr. Morehead, dese tam Greasers are von hell men. Da youst slip ride oup behint de pack and stuck one long sharp knife into a fella. Den ven you dinks you be all alone, dere be two, dree, maybe haf dotzen, vas ben vatchen every step you dakes. I know dem Greasers-Mexicans so better as you, Meester Morehead. Den you see dem brigand fellas haf some one to vatch all de dime for some who haf monies. Now I youst del you, ve must vait und go some dark nite ven ve can't be seen."

John Morehead was disposed to be more expeditious and at once put their intentions into practice. But knowing that Gobher had been among the Mexicans for several years, he finally concluded that it would be best to be guided by his advice, for the present at least. In the meantime they could be employed at other things that would throw off suspicion and give them ample time to perfect their plans.

After waiting about ten days, and it being the dark of the moon, a night was agreed on to go and make another trial to see if the money could be found. Procuring a dark lantern, they set off, after all appeared to be still and quiet. Arriving at the place they, by Gobher's directions, commenced to dig in the spot where the treasure was supposed to be.

Eagerness lent strength to John Morehead's arms and he soon had a large place excavated. "In a box," Gobher would say, "you find von box den you find him." As John was striking down with his pick, he struck a hard substance, which caused him to call Gobher's at-

tention to it. What could it be? Certainly the long wished for box that contained the money. John worked with redoubled energy and the dirt and gravel were heaved out with a vim.

"There it is," says John; "see that lump?"

"Yes," says Gobher, "youst let me in dat hole. I fetch him oud qwick, I del you."

And suiting the action to the word, he had the object in his arms and out on the bank in a jiffy; and laying it down on the ground, he was about to pry it open with his crow, when John proposed to take it to the heicinda and examine the contents there; and taking up the box, started off in the direction of their quarters, when all at once a light flashed in their faces and on looking up, they saw to their amazement a half dozon banditis with pistols drawn and cocked, pointing right at them.

"Tam, hell, tam Greasers! You be von gorrilla band," Gobher blurted out. But his talk was suddenly cut short, for the quick, short command from the leader meant business, and *Noi* rung out, and the only safety lay in an unconditional surrender of them both and box and *Biono por agy,* came the command again, and the two were marched off in double quick time.

The band was mounted on mustangs, and John and Gobher were mounted on a large one, their legs made fast underneath and their hands securely tied down to their sides, and a man in the lead with a halter and one behind with a gun. They traveled all night and about 4 o'clock a. m. reached the rendezvous of the band, which was none other than the one which had captured Quag and Tim, and which was now in possession of Morehehead and Gobher.

CHAPTER XII.

Florence returned home some three weeks after John

Morehead had gone south. While she visited with her friends, she attended several women's rights meetings and her mind was pretty well filled up with the isms of the day. In fact, she had become a convert to the Susan B. Anthony doctrine.

The first thing on arriving home was to acquaint Mrs. Dedcom of her conversion.

"Yes, Mrs. Dedcom," she observed to that lady, "I'm a tetotal, out and out women's right disciple. I'll show John Morehead that women are not to be trampled under foot any longer. I'm going to be my own man after this and Mrs. Dedcom you are right, we women are not to be tied down to one man all the time. I'll inform John Morehead of that just as soon as he gets home. Who knows, I may have married the wrong man."

"Yes indeed," chimed in Mrs. Dedcom, "man and woman, too. That sounds musical, and we will put a woman in the Presidential chair next election time; and a woman shall be sent to England as chief minister, with power extraordinary, to make treaties and reside at the Court of St. James. Yes," Mrs. Dedcom continued, "that is what we will have. The Court is what I like—to live in grand style and be courted by lords and dukes; and we will be equal to Queen Victoria herself,"

The meeting was at the Morehead homestead and to have questioned the truth of their assertions would have been met with utter contempt by the two female ministers, while enjoying their talk on woman's rights. Florence continued:

"Talk about the American eagle being a fit emblem of liberty! That may all be well enough, provided it is a female bird and not of the masculine gender. It should be an emblem of female liberty."

Rosa was an unwilling listener to the talk between her

mother and Mrs. Dedcom. She was too young to enter into the full purport of the conversation and meaning of the ideas advanced, but she understood enough to get an idea of the subject matter. After Mrs. Dedcom had left the house, Rosa thus addressed herself to her mother:

"Mama, what is the reason you want to be a man? Are you not satisfied to be a good mother and live with papa, and me, and Erney? Why do you want to go away off and leave me and Erney here all alone? Aint we good children? I spec we are naughty sometimes—Erney is when he breaks his playthings. But then I tells him that he must not say bad words and be patient, cause you know I allers helps to fix his sled and kite and rocking horse; and he allers says I am the only one who cares for him and tries to be a better boy—then he is a real good boy. Now mama, aint we good?"

Florence felt the full force of Rosa's remarks and she became very thoughtful and serious for a little while. She drew Rosa closer to her and kissed her affectionately on her cheeks. But her mind had been so engrossed with ideas of women's rights that there was not much room for anything else.

Just as Mrs. Dedcom left Florence, the grocer's express wagon stopped at the gate. The driver jumping out, politely presented a bill for payment to Florence. The bill, he said, had been standing for some time and he was directed to collect the bill if possible, and if not paid, to leave it with the magistrate to be sued on. Florence had pride about her and desired that the bill should be paid; but she was out of funds,—in fact, had nothing to buy the actual necessaries of life with. Finally she became impatient and cross and told the man that she was not paying Mr. Morehead's debts.

CHAPTER XIII.

When the brigands had seen their prisoners made secure in their apartments, for there were many and mostly under the ground, they all prepared for rest and sleep.

John Morehead and Gobher were put in separate rooms and given to understand that an attempt to escape would be punished with death. As the prisoners were exhausted by the long night's ride, they, too, were soon in deep slumber, forgetting for the time the danger through which they had passed.

It was near night when John Morehead awoke from his sleep. After realizing the situation which he was in, he began to reconnoiter the place. It appeared to be an underground apartment with no light, save a large lamp that hung in the center of the room and some daylight that straggled through a grating at one end of the room. There were some matting and couches placed around the sides of the room that appeared to be used for beds, and a few stools and benches completed the furniture.

About the first thing an American thinks of when put in prison is how to escape and that thought was uppermost in John's mind when he began to fully realize his situation. However, there were certain misgivings in his mind about Mr. Gobher. Somehow it seemed to his mind that there was treachery somewhere. How did it happen that they were seized and carried off by the banditti just at a certain time? It so happened that they were not molested only when they were searching for the hidden treasure. He further noticed that occasionally a conversation was carried on between the leader of the gang and Gobher, on their journey to the den; but as it was in Spanish, he could not determine the nature of the conversation. Another thing, they

were kept separate by the band. Could it be that Gobher was a decoy to help the brigands?

As these thoughts were passing through Morehead's brain, he heard a noise outside. One voice was a negro's and seemed familiar to him. The other was that of the chief of the clan. The next minute the door of the room was opened and a tall, dark female figure entered, bearing something in her hand. Morehead could not see, because of the darkness, who or what the person was, but evidently she had something in her hands for the prisoner to eat.

Just as she turned to set the dish down, the light fell on her face and John Morehead recognized Quag, and with one loud hello, exclaimed, "Quag!" She at once knew the voice and staggering to a seat, exclaimed: "Massa John Morehead, de Lawd bress you! Massa John, dey got you heah, O my!—" She did not finish her sentence, for the chief had advanced.

After closing the door and placing himself between Morehead and Quag, demanded in the best English he could use: "You havs some frentz what pay for your ransom." At the same time he motioned to Quag to keep silent.

John Morehead had surmised what was coming and at once concluded to put on a bold front and defy the chief. He knew no fear. He had been in too many dangerous places to blanch now and he gave the chief to understand that he could get no ransom money out of him.

As the chief motioned to Quag to begone out of the room, he turned to John and drawing a stiletto from his bosom, made signs to hlm that if in three days no arrangements were made for his ransom, his life would pay the forfeit. So saying, he strode out of the room and securely locked the door.

John Morehead, when left alone, ate a small portion

of the food left by Quag, but his thoughts ran in this wise:

"Well, well, Mr. Brigand Chief, that is the case, is it, and I have to pay a ransom for myself before I can get out of this, eh? Well that is pretty hard to do when a fellow has no money. Well, Mr. Chief," he continued, I will see if I stay here. I have been in a good many tight places and have come out all right. But what in the world brought Quag here? She must be a prisoner, and how many more of my townsmen, I wonder, are here with these guerrilla devils?"

So saying, John Morehead began to examine more particularly the room he was confined in. Having been considerably refreshed by the meal that Quag left, it gave him strength. First he went to the door and began to examine it, then to a window, bnt no means of escape offered in that direction. He tried all the sides of the walls—they appeared to be solid granite. If he could only get an interview with Quag, he perhaps migght find out something to his advantage.

Then his thoughts turned to Gobher again and what had become of him, and was he a true man or a traitor. One thing was serious and that was, the guerrilla band would carry out its threats.

CHAPTER XIV.

It will be remembered that when Tim was captured and taken to the den, that he gave the name of John Morehead as his best friend, who would pay or cause to be paid a ransom for him; and that a messenger was despatched to the city to post a letter to Morehead, informing him of his friends whereabouts and that a certain sum was demanded for his release.

As has been stated in a former chapter, the banditti of the mountainous districts of Mexico always had their

friends and allies in the towns and cities to aid and assist them in their nefarious business, and sometimes influential men and rich merchants were connected with these bands and gave information of anyone suspected of having rich relatives or friends who would pay a good round price for their ransom.

Now as this messenger whom the band employed was a discreet fellow, and one trained in the busines, on reaching the city he naturally sought his chums and to them would tell his buslness; and by these persons he accidentally learned of John Moreheud and Mr. Gobher's presence in Monterey, and at once began to lay plans for their capture and for the present did not post the letter as directed by the banditti. And on his return to the den, he madə known his discoveries to the chief, who immediately opened negotiations with their colleagues in the city for the capture of the two men.

And now comes the secret of the cause of the banditti being on hand the night when John and Gobher were prospecting for the hidden treasure: Gobher was an accomplice or stool pigeon and gave the information when it became necessary to get anyone into the den to be held for ransom.

The story told by Gobher to Morehead of his former capture by the banditti was all a sham and as for thə box containing the money, that was a sham also. It was used only as a means of decoy—and Gobher was in league with the band.

Thus matters stood when Mr. Morehead and Gobher were taken to the den, and a light but dimly at first, but more clear as time advanced, began to break in on his mind that treachery had been practiced on him by the wiley banditti, all brought about by the wiley, cnnning money lender and confederate—Mr. Gobher.

If he could only lay hands on that traitor he would

make it interesting for him in a very few minutes. Although John Morehead was a man peacefully disposed, he never could endure treachery.

But to return to John Morehead in the den. He had become satisfied that the place he was in was well guarded and to make his escape therefrom would be attended with great difficulty and danger. However, to stay there and wait for a ransom was very uncertain. Although one chance in a thousand would be his, he resolved to take that one.

He could very well determine that it was night, and if not disturbed by any of the band coming in, he could devise means of escape. The banditti had takem his only weapon, a revolver, from him when captured. He had a large clasp knife that they did not get. This he examined and concluded to use it in case of necessity.

For an hour he reconnoitered about the den, but nothing was found or seen with which to assist him in escaping. At length becoming wearied, he sat down and began to study the situation. After mature reflection, he concluded to not make any further attempt that night, but to await developments in the morning. He knew that three days would elapse before any change would be made either in the imprisonment or offer of ransom. So finding himself somewhat exhausted he lay down on a couch and was soon lost in slumber.

In the morning he was awakened by a noise at the door of his room and starting up from his couch, he listened intently for a few minutes, when the noise was repeated. Seme one wished to enter for a parley with him, was about all he could make out. Finally the noise ceased—all was still again.

John Morehead now began to examine more closely than he had before, the room in which he was confined. He had determined that he would get out, let the conse-

quence be as it would. Not only would he make his escape, but he would determine wao was confined there beside himself.

So saying, he began to examine more closely around the room. In a corner he found a kind of framework to be used as a bedstead and seat. By the dim light he discovered that it was made of *Bois De Arc* or osage timber. This he wrenched apart and selecting a piece some three feet long and an inch and a half in diameter, he proceeded on his examination. His club was a most welcome weapon, it being almost as hard as iron. It would not only serve as a means of escape, but also as an offensive weapon.

At one end of the room, where the door was located, he had discovered a small grated window. This he approached and began to examine closely. It was getting quite light outside and by twisting his club through the bars, he discovered that they would give some. So laying out all his strength and using the stick as a lever, he managed to wrench one of the bars out of its socket. Then another and another until he had removed four of them. He concluded that the opening was large enough to get through and at once began to make his egress.

Just as he had passed the grating and gained a foothold on the outside, he heard a shout. That voice he knew to be Tim Morarity's. As the room he was confined in was mostly underground, he had to mount a few steps cut in the earth in order to gain the surface; and on reaching the level ground, he was confronted by three of the band, who at once presented their pistols and demanded of him to surrender.

It was a desperate place to be in, the odds being so much against him. But he knew it was death to surrender and perhaps death to fight, so he choose the latter. In an instant, gathering all his strength, with one

fell sweep with his manceneta club, he felled two of the brigands to the earth and was aiming a blow at the third, when an unseen blow from behind felled him to the ground. But it was only a moment until he was on his feet again, and then that shout again and Tim was on the ground.

"Hould your ground, Mr. Morehead. It's Tim that's here, arrah! But I'll smash the villians. At 'em again; now give that ugly looking fella a lick wid de shelalah. Whack it to 'em again."

So saying, Tim dealt his blows right and left, thick and fast.

"Why Tim, what in the world brought you here?" exclaimed John Morehead.

"Niver moind," says Tim. "See the divils beyant. No time now to tell stories, but let us get out o' this nest of thaves. Come, let us run for the city. Pooy Quag,' he continued. "See there. Two of the black imps are guarding her. Quag, run for your life," shouted Tim.

So taking John by the arm, the two started on a run for the road leading to the city.

There were pistol shots fired after them by the brigands, but they were soon out of range.

The night in question, Tim had decided to make his escape, and had succeeded in gaining his liberty, but was beset by a half dozen or more of the brigands after he had got outside the enclosure, and it was his shout that Morehead had heard when he, too, was getting out of the den, and thus the two were close to one another without the knowledge of either. But now they were out and on the road to the city, where they could claim the protection of the authorities, providing they were not all banditti.

After getting into the main road, Tim began to

explain to John how he was captured and how he had determined to make his escape at all hazzards at that time.

They had not proceeded far before they heard a loud cry for help from the chaparal.

"Help! for de Lawd's sake, help, Massa Morehead, da is gwine to murder dis poor old nigger wench."

The shouts and screams were recognized by John and Tim as being those of Quag.

She had also made a desperate attempt to gain her freedom, but was overtaken, and desperate attempts were made by two of the banditti to take her back to the den. But John and Tim with their revolver and shelalah made such an onslaught on the ruffians that they beat a hasty retreat, and Quag was rescued and taken to the city.

Once inside the walls of Monterey, they felt comparatively safe. The next thing was to get away from the pestiferous place, where it seemed that the principal trait of the inhabitants was treachery.

But now a question arose. They were out of money, and to get back to God's country required the one thing —cash.

There were some Americans in Monterey, engaged in commercial pursuits, and to these they made application for a loan. At first their request was treated indfferently, but by giving good reference and a promise of a good bonus they at length succeeded in getting the required amount to defray their expenses, and also a passport to take them through the lines. However, Morehead had learned by this time to keep silent and say but little to anyone, and that little only such as was necessary to make his wants known.

Tim and Quag several times began to relate their experience, but were stopped by Morehead, who observed

to them that silence in every particular was absolutely necessary until they could get out of the treacherous country.

They did not get sight of Gobher, the German, any more, as that money lender and traitor would have imperiled his life had he come within reach of either Tim or John.

They made hasty preparations to get on their journey, and on the third day after their escape from the hrigands they found themselves well on their way to Brownsville, where they would repack and start for New Orleans.

On their journey, and after they had got clear of the treacherous Mexicans and inside the lines of the United States, they began to explain to one another how they made their escape. As each one told their story Tim would flourish his shelalah and say:

"The dirty blackguards, and thin to have that spalpeen of a Jew to be wid the loikes of honest men, and he a black-hearted traitor. Arrah! bad luck to the likes o' him. Ould Satan will roast him—and moind yez that it's Tim Moriarity as sez it—and it's me belafe is that the whole tribe of thim Greasers are small pirates. They are a bad lot."

"It was me that came down here to hunt yez up, John Morehead. I could not belave that yez would go down there among them divils, and if yez did then yez wad want some one to look afhter yez before them heathens got your money or scalp."

Then Quag commenced.

"De Lawd be praised, Massa John, you is safe; and who would have thought it, that you was away down there among the heathens. Why, bress yo, Massa John, I was lookin for my ole man, and was goin till I found him, and dem ole Satans tuck dis chile and made me

cook and wash for them; and when I wanted to go, dey jist got out dere big knives and sed dey would kill dis chile."

So the party gave in their experience on the road, and after a week's journey arrived safely in New Orleans.

John and Tim secured passage on an up-river steamer, intending to keep on until they reached their once native town with as little delay as possible; but Quag determined to stay in the city and continue the search for her "ole man."

The parting words of Quag are herə given as near as can be in Quag's own language:

"Now, Massa John, I bids yo good-bye; I wants to go wid yo, but I jist can't. I wants to see my ole man once more before I dies. De Lawd bress yo. De Lawd keep yo free from harm, Massa John. I spec nebber to see yo any more—and dat bressed chile, poor Rosa. May the good Lawd put his arms around dat chile. Massa John, kiss her for me."

Tim, although not in love with the negro race, could not conceal his emotion, and as he turned away a tear glistened on his sun-browned cheek.

In a few hours the two were steaming up the river as fast as possible.

Nothing much of importance transpired on their trip until within a few hundred miles of home.

John Morehead began to feel that he would land at home in a penniless condition and that his debts would go unpaid. This thought weighed heavily on his mind, and then there was Florence—she must be met and learn that his trip was a failure, and that they in all probability would be reduced to beggary.

These thoughts bore so heavily on his mind that Tim noticed it and had resolved to engage him in conversation and propose some way out of the difficulty.

One day, as John Morehead had appeared more gloomy than before, Tim approached him and began:

"Mr. Morehead, it's no use crying over spilled milk; it's a long lane that has no turn. hould up yer head and be a man; there is luck ahead for ye."

John listened to Tim as he ran on with his words of encouragement. He was about to make reply, when a shrill whistle or scream louder than a dozen locomotive whistles came up from the boiler deck and then a report as loud as a twenty-four pounder came up, and the boat gave one lurch to the leeward and John and Tim found themselves struggling in the water. As they were both good swimmers, they were not long in getting hold of portions of the wreck and then began to look around them.

One of the boilers had bursted and men and women were struggling in the water.

"To the rescue!" shouted Tim, who true to his native generosity was ever on the alert to assist the needy.

A woman was clinging to a piece of the wreck. John seeing the perilous situation she was in, instantly plunged in to her rescue, and getting her safe on a piece of the wreck, went to help a man who was struggling in the water endeavoring to save some one, evidently a child. John had got hold of a spar and pushing it in the direction of the man and child, succeeded in getting them on to it.

As a part of the boat was not broken up, such of the crew as escaped were manning the yawls; and it was not long before all those who were in the water were landed safely on the shore.

For a few minutes all was confusion among the rescued and crew, who had exerted their utmost in saving the passengers. Each was trying to ascertain the injuries they had sustained by the disaster and also the hurts

and bruises of others. John and Tim were very thankful that they had come out of the disaster all sound.

As John was looking around among the survivors, he was accosted by the man and child whom he had rescued. This man was the captain, and his child was accompanying him on the trip. He grasped John Morehead by the hand, and the big tears rolled down his cheeks as he thanked him over and over, his heart and tears speaking more eloquently than words could, for the timely assistance rendered by John and Tim.

After the crew and passengers were all safe ashore, and the extent of the disaster became known, the next thing to be looked after was to get to their destination.

Some farm houses near by furnished what was necessary for their immediate wants. The capsain knowing that that there was a boat due up in a short time so informed the passengers. So after seeing to the comforts of those at the farm houses, he stationed himself on a high point of land near the shore, with a flag to signal the first boat.

The accident occurred in the fore part of the day, but it was just at dusk before the much wished for boat hove in sight, and it was a most welcome one to the captain and passengers. The boat landed and took on all the passengers and crew, who in due time were landed in St. Louis.

Once in the city the captain lost no time in providing for the transportation of his passengers to their respective places of destination. To Mr. Morehead he said: "You shall be rewarded for your timely assistance in rescuing me and my darling child."

He not only provided him with transportation home, but furnished him with a letter of credit which would enable him to draw on him for certain sums in case he should need it. Mr. Morehead at first was dis-

posed to not accept the generous offer; but the captain would not take no for an answer.

Mr. Morehead and Tim were soon afloat again, steaming it up the river with buoyant feelings and light hearts, and after a few days were safely landed at the wharf of their native village.

CHAPTER XV.

After Florence returned from Kansas where her parents lived, she had become more bold in her avowals that women were to be free and emancipated from their thraldom. And she found a co-worker in the person of Mrs. Dedcom, and a very willing one, also. And when the grocer's man left the house after trying to collect the bill, she slammed the door behind him and remarked:

"That's the way—bills are coming here to be paid. I'm going to have things, and the debts will go unpaid. Am I to go without things just to pay Mr. Morehead's bills? No; you bet I don't. Women are to be free, yes free, and not tied down to a man. No, I don't care for any Morehead that ever lived, nor any of their kin. I'll let them know that."

And Florence worked herself up to a towering passion and raved around the room like a mad woman.

Just as she was making these remarks, Squire Bloss came into the room—being admitted by Rosa—and as he spoke or was about to speak to Florence, she broke out in a loud voice:

"Yes, you have another bill to present. You come here to collect another debt that John Morehead owes, do you, eh? Do you think I'm made of money?"

And thus Florence raved, not noticing who she was talking to.

"My dear madam, I've come--"

"Yes, I know you have come. Every body comes here to collect bills—yes, to collect John Morehead's bills."

"Why bless me," says the squire, "I do not want to—"

"No, I know you do not want to go away without the money."

Florence had worked herself up to such a frenzy of passion that she did not notice who she was talking to. Squire Bloss, with all his blandness, became somewhat flustrated and deemed it best to beat a hasty retreat, but was met at the door by Rosa, who had been an unwilling listener to the ravings of her mother.

"Why mama," Rosa said, "be calm. Why do you take on so? Sit down. This is Squire Bloss. He has some business to transact with you."

Florence sank down in a chair and with an effort calmed her feelings.

The squire had, it was true, some bills left with him for collection against John Morehead and had come, ostensibly, for the purpose of having a talk with Mrs. Morehead about the matter. But his diplomacy was all knocked out of him when he saw how Florence had used her vocal powers.

But the change was very quick with Florence when she found who she had been talking to, and in a few moments she had tuned her voice to another key entirely.

"Why, Mr. Bloss, you must excuse. I was so—so—you know—so wrought up by that grocer man coming here to collect bills that I thought every body wanted money; and you know, Mr. Bloss, that John is entirely broke up. Now, squire, don't you think that women ought to vote and manage things like the men? We women have been in slavery long enough. I know you will be on our side and see that we have our rights."

And as she ran on in this strain she actually tried to smile on the squire and beguile him in that way. The squire was not proof against women's smiles and wiles, and began to tumble to Florence and to acquiesce in all her propositions. He did not want to cross her at that time—he had other views and business to transact, and that was to get some clew to Morehead's effects, in order to collect some debts. But he very prudently did not broach the subject to Florence.

By this time she had got into a very pleasant mood and began to ply the squire with questions.

"Now don't you think," she continued, "that women ought to have their rights and not be slaves for the men, and vote and hold office?"

"Well," the squire replied, "I understand that women rule the world, anyway. I think women should and do have their rights. I think," continued he, "that the women should saw the wood, and plow, and work at carpenter work, and—"

He was about to continue when Florence began to show signs of fire in her eyes.

"But permit me," he continued, "to add, that the men should wash the dishes and clothes, and sew on buttons, and sweep the rooms, and air the beds, and—and—"

He was going to continue, but Florence chimed in and took the words out of his mouth and said:

"Mind the children, and scrub, and—"

By this change in the conversation Florence began to smile again, when the squire changed his tactics and continued:

"And the men should stay at home and receive their beaux on Sunday evenings and keep the big dog away from the front gate."

"O my, would not that be nice?" said Florence.

As the squire found that his talk changed her accord-

ing to the manner of his speech, he concluded that he would put in a clincher, and although he was vain and conceited among the opposite sex, yet he was not a convert to the woman's rights craze.

"Yes," he continued, "the women shall have their rights—they shall vote, they shall lectioneer, and take voters up to the bar and treat them to beer, whiskey, cigars, etc., and then they shall hold offices, and be marshals, and soldiers, and fight the battles of their country, and win glory and renown. Would that not be fame for you, Mrs. Morehead?"

Florence, who had all the while hung on the squire's words, did not exactly know what to make of his remarks, but began to show impatience a little. But the squire continued.

"And be engineers and firemen on our railroads, and in order to carry out the program you are to wear the breeches and change the order of things generally."

The squire began to be terribly in earnest. But Florence began to suspect that he was becoming somewhat facetious, and rising to her feet she pointed to the door and bade the squire good day. She began to have a faint suspicion that he was not so much of a women's rights man after all.

After the squire left the house, Florence let off a few shots as much as to say, "Well that is an old woman killer and he don't fool around me with his bills."

When John and Tim landed in their native town their hearts were sad. Especially was this so of John, for a few of his intimate friends were cognizant of the nature of his trip to Monterey. A first inquiry made by the citizens was "Where is the money lender, Gobher? Did you succeed in getting the hidden treasure?"

Of course there could be but one answer to the question and that was, "Gobher was a fraud and the hidden

money a myth." These questions need not to have been asked, for the countenance of John Morehead indicated as much.

The meeting between him and Florence was not of the most agreeable kind—surely not that which should characterize meetings between husband and wife after an extended separation. However, courtesies were exchanged between them, and Florence seemed resigned to their fate, for she knew that they would be reduced to sheer poverty. True they had their homestead and another building in town; but they were both mortgaged, and no visible means of paying the indebtedness off.

The trip to Monterey had cost quite a sum and some of the funds were borrowed for that purpose. This having been advanced by John's friends, had to be returned at all hazards. This was the state of John Morehead's affairs after he had returned and it was not a very enviable position to be in.

However, he held up his head as best he could and put on a bold front. He was in the prime of life and his arm was strong, and he braced himself for the battle. knowing that pluck and energy were the two requisites in the battle of life.

He loved his children as a parent can only love a child And they were getting up in the world and needed that care and attention that was so essential for their government in after life. Characters were forming that would go with them to their graves. Rosa was especially her father's favorite and her childish prattle always made his heart light.

John Morehead worked at any thing that turned up. He was untiring in his efforts to get a paying salary of some kind in order to regain his lost fortune, His property was re-mortgaged for several times and he was

no nearer paying them off than when the indebtedness was first incurred.

So matters wore on, and Florence became more and more irritable and sour in her temper towards her husband. Whenever opportunity offered she would descant on John's apparent neglect of duty to her and his family, and made an especial point to so air her opinion when any visitors or neighbors were present.

The burden of her song was, she was a slave and had to work like a "nigger." With two or three helps about the house, that complaint seemed to be made without any foundation whatever. Still at times she was all smiles, and honey was in every word, but it was only for certain ones that she reserved these for.

Time passed and at the end of three years John Morehead found his finances in a bad condition—no chance to lift the mortgages on his property secured.

CHAPTER XVI.

Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart were sitting in the office of the former, when the squire observed:

"I tell you, Mr. Smart, John Morehead has got to go under financially. He can not hold up his head much longer. The mortgages on his property will be due in a short time and it will be sold under the hammer. Now I propose that we watch the case and be ready to share in the spoils as they offer themselves."

"Well what do you propose, squire," says Lawyer Smart. "The holders of the mortgages will bid it all in and I don't see much chance for a speculation in that direction. Speak more freely, squire."

"Well it is this: In the first place the property is worth more by one-third than the mortgages call for. Now Florence, John's wife, is vain, and crazy on the woman's rights doctrine. You go and get into the con-

fidence of John Morehead; tell him that if he succeeds in redeeming his property that there will be other creditors come in and put in their claims, and the whole of it will be lost forever. Say to him the best thing he can do is to put the title, subject to the mortgages, in his wife's name; that by so doing he can save it."

"Well, but," says Mr. Smart, "how will that help matters?"

"Wait and I'll tell you," says the squire. "As I told you before, Florence is vain and when she finds that the title is in her name, she will think that everything and everybody is at her command. She will demand all rents and incomes on the property to be paid to her, and control the renting of it. Her husband can step down and out and go to Guinea as far as she is concerned. Do you see?"

"Yes, yes; I see, I see;" says Lawyer Smart, rubbing his hands with glee. "Go on, squire."

"Well you see the income on the property will not be sufficient to satisfy her vanity. She will want some—you tell her that you can advance some on her realty. You and I have some money; we go and buy up the mortgage; we can get it at a discount; then humor her whims a little while, and then close in on the mortgage. Do you see?"

"Yes I see; that is capital. Squire, you are a schemer; we lawyers are smart. I'll go tomorrow and open the subject to Mrs. Morehead."

CHAPTER XVII.

Erney and Rosa were sitting in the parlor the next evening after the dialogue occurred between the two village worthies.

"I wish I was big and strong like papa," observed Erney to Rosa. "I guess I could make some money and help papa."

"Yes, dear Erney," says Rosa, "and I wish I could do something, too. Papa takes it so hard that he can't pay his debts. O, I wish I could help him! But Erney you know you are not strong. It was only the other day that the doctor said you must be careful. You have studied so hard, and you have that mean cough. I believe I'm stronger than you, Erney."

"O never mind, Rosa; I shall be well soon. I wish I was as good as aunty. I wish all people were good; but there are some persons in the world I don't like."

"Why who are they, Erney? I thought everybody was good. Papa is a good man. Mama is good, aint she?"

"Well, Rosa, I don't like that man Lawyer Smart, and Squire Bloss. That man Smart was here today and had a long talk with mama. I tell you, Rosa, I don't like him."

"Well, Erney, may be it is for the best. You know that at Sabbath school we learn that we must love our neighbors."

"Yes, Rosa, I know it; but then you know that hymn they sung at church last Sunday? It says 'that every prospect pleases and only man is vile.' Why, Rosa, the birds all love one another and help one another. Don't you see how the old robin that builds her nest out in the arbor every year loves her mate and helps to build her nest; and they sing to one another all the time. And then there are the beautiful little wrens—how they twitter and sing to their little birdies. And then to see the beautiful flowers—the morning glories and four o'clocks. It seems to me that people ought to be as good as the birds and flowers."

Rosa had hung on her brother's words all the while and wanted to talk some about the birds and flowers; but she only observed:

"Well, Erney, I wish we could help papa."

But Erney, who had got into that train of thought, could not get his mind in any other channel and continued:

"Aunty says Heaven is a beautiful place and all good people will go there. We'll go there, wont we Rosa? You know that beautiful song we sing at Sabbath school: 'I love to think of that Heavenly land.' Rosa can't you sing that? Sing it for me."

There was a listener to the conversation between the children. It was their father; and when Erney wanted Rosa to sing, he stepped in and embracing his dear children, observed to them:

"Yes sing, my dear children; sing that beautiful hymn."

And Rosa, ever willing to please her papa, sang the hymn through. When it was concluded, their father bade them good night and sent them to their rooms. After they had retired, he thus soliloquized:

"Those dear children are my only comfort and solace. If I was only as pure as they I should be happy. I may lose everything, but my dear children will be cared for. Yes," he continued, "I will work—work on and on as long as God gives me strength. The thought of them brings me to my duty. God has given me those blessed ones to remind me of my duty to Him, HIM. And although losses and crosses encompass me on every hand, I will bear up under every trial and affliction, and look to Him for strength and support. But I see Erney has that cough and that hectic flush on his cheek—it bodes no good. May God give him health to be a help to me."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Good morning, Mrs. Morehead, I'm glad to see you looking so well. How are all the folks?"

This was said to Florence by Lawyer Smart the next morning after he and the squire had their conversation, and as agreed upon, was to be the subject to open negotiations on the title to the Morehead realty. Florence was very much flattered by the seeming politeness of Lawyer Smart, especially when he praised her good looks. She was vain and actually courtesied to Lawyer Smart and put on her blandest smile.

Motioning him to a seat, she became very profuse in her acknowledgements of his compliments. After the usual salutations were passed, Lawyer Smart began to approach the subject of his errand. He began to explain to Florence that so many persons were breaking up and that it would always be best for business men to have the title to any realty put in the name of the wife. He also explained to her that Mr. Morehead, being involved, should so dispose of his property in her name; that it would then be safe from remorseless creditors.

Florence caught on to the idea at once and was eager to have the matter attended to at once. But in order to do this John Morehead must be won over to the scheme and sign the titles.

"I know John will do it," said Florence. "He surely can see it will be to his advantage, and he can save his property by making the transfer."

It became necessary to get John into the scheme and in order to do that properly he must be talked into it by some one. After some hesitancy she told Lawyer Smart to call in the afternoon, and she would have a talk with John and get his views on the matter.

Accordingly, after she had dismissed Lawyer Smart, she awaited John's return to the house with considerable anxiety. Finally as the hour of dinner drew nigh, John came in looking pale and dejected. She put on her sweetest smile: however, it was something she had been

a stranger to for an indefinite period. And taking a seat close to her husband, she opened the subject to him. John Morehead listened until she was done with her story and then replied:

"I would not do anything to defraud my creditors or to cover up and hide my means. It is true that the woman whom I have chosen to be my companion through life should be trusted and be the same as myself."

But after some conversation on the subject, John said he would give the matter a careful study and consult aunty about it.

Florence was now changed in her demeanor towards her husband and put on her sweetest smiles whenever she was in his company.

Lawyer Smart plied all his tact to induce John to make over the title to his real estate to his wife. Squire Bloss, too, put in his spare time in Florence's company and, although she mistrusted him to some extent, still she would lend a willing ear to his talk.

A week or more was spent in diplomacy with John Morehead and his wife in order to get the title in the name of Florence Morehead.

When John referred the matter to aunty, she observed to him that honesty was the best policy; that if by so doing he could gain time and discharge all of his debts, then do it. But the interview left John in doubt, and finally, after a deal of chaffing, John Morehead made over the title to his realty to his wife, Florence.

As soon as this was done, she began to assume her old demeanor, and even more so. Exacting in all things, she gave John to understand that she could now assume the management of the business herself without his help. He saw the dilemma he was in, but too late to remedy the matter.

The mortgage on the property would be due in about nine months and the money was going to parties who were going to have it when due.

John worked manfully and was continually planning to make the payments when due, if possible. Florence became more vain and was continually wanting some article of merchandise or furniture far beyond their means. Thus matters stood when Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart had succeeded in getting the title to John's land in his wife's name.

Now the next thing with them was to get the closing down on the mortgage. Florence demanded all rents accruing on the realty.

A few days after the transfer of the property, Morehead began to be more and more convinced that he had made a mistake. And he became convinced also that there had been undue influence used on himself, by the actions of his wife. That he was willing to satisfy Florence in all things reasonable could not be denied.

After due reflection he spoke of the matter to her and hinted that it would be best to undo what had been done. This hint at once aroused her to ventilate her thoughts.

"No, Mr. Morehead; I have the title to the property," she observed, "and it is mine. I'll attend to it, sir. It is MINE! I have the deed to it and no one gets it from me. Lawyer Smart says it is mine. He will defend it for me. Do you understand, Mr. Morehead? I'll never sign any deed for anyone. It is mine!"

CHAPTER XIX.

"John," observed aunty, one morning a few days after the foregoing conversation occurred, "does thee know that Erney is growing worse? He had a chill last night and a sweat that made the bed clothes wringing wet.

Thee must see a doctor at once. This morning his cheeks were flushed, and then that hacking cough."

"Why, aunty," observed John, "I did not know of the chill. Does he eat anything—has he any appetite?"

"No, John; he tries to, but its no use. I fear, John, that we will not keep him long. He talks almost contiuually of the beautiful birds and flowers. And yesterday he told me that he had been a bad boy at first; had been careless and did not help you as he should; but he would be a good boy when he got well."

"O, aunty, it breaks my heart to hear this. I'll go at once for the doctor. Aunty, we must save that boy; death shall not take him from us yet."

As John turned to go out, he was met at the door by Rosa, who took her papa by the hand and told him to come to Erney at once. "He talks so much and wanted to see you, he said." Rosa led him into the sick room where the sufferer lay.

"O my dear boy," was his first exclamation on entering the room. "I'll go at once for the doctor. You must take some medicine."

"O no," says Erney, "I think I shall be better soon. But papa, I was a bad boy once—a good while ago. I did not help you as I ought; but, papa, you must forgive me. I am good now; and papa, dear papa, I dreamed last night of the beautiful stars away up in the sky. There is one they call the star of Bethlehem, aint it, papa? It looked so beautiful and bright. Rosa, did you not see that star?"

"O my dear boy, what makes you talk so? You must rest more. I'll go at once for the doctor."

So dashing the fast gathering tears from his eyes, he at once sought the doctor and brought him in. After a critical examination of the case, he took Mr. Morehead to one side and explained to him that not much could be

done but good nursing, and that he should be prepared for the worst. It might be that after the warm, sunny days set in that he would rally; but the case, he said, was beyond the reach of medicine. After a few words of encouragement to Rosa, he left, with a promise to come again.

As the doctor left, Florence came into the room and gazed intently on Erney. Then she began to upbraid her husband.

"John Morehead, you have not done your duty. Why did you not have a doctor for Erney long ago? You are too stingy to pay out one cent for your boy's sickness. You just let him lay here and die. You are a brute. O my boy, Erney, your father will just let you lay here and die. I'll go for the doctor myself, this minute. I'll see if something can't be done."

"Why mama," says Rosa, "what do you mean? Papa just went for the doctor and he has been here this minute. Dear mama, papa will do all he can for Erney, wont he Erney?"

"Yes, dear Rosa, papa has done what he can. Mama, I love you, I love papa, and Rosa, and aunty. Now why can't you all be good? I'll soon be well and help papa."

As Erney was talking aunty came into the room and sitting down beside the bed began to caress and talk to Erney. Then she turned to John and said:

"The must get me some horehound, and some elecompain, and some mullen. I'll see if I can do anything for Erney. We can do something for him, I think."

Turning to Florence, she thus addressed her:

"Thee must be more gentle and kind in thy talk to John. No doubt thee loves Erney; but kind words are best, especially in a sick room."

Then addressing Rosa, she said:

"Thee must help thy father get that medicine for Erney. We must all pray for the recovery of the sick."

So saying, she again turned her attention to Erney. All was now bustle and hurrying to and fro in the Morehead mansion.

John went at once for the medicine aunty had recommended and Rosa to help him. All were thoroughly aroused and aunty's commands were carried out. Under the skillful treatment of aunty, in a few days Erney was able to be about the room, and eat some; but still the hectic flush was upon his cheeks. Aunty plied her decoction of herbs and teas, and watched by the bedside of the little sufferer almost constantly.

A few days after John Morehead had made over his property to his wife, Tim appeared to be very uneasy and wanted to have a talk with John. He was well aware of what John had done, and although not versed in matters of law, he thought John should not have done it. So watching an opportunity, he thus addressed him:

"Misther Morehead, is it thrue that yez have made way wid your property to yer wife?"

"Well, yes," replied John. "I don't see any real mistake in that. I did it to please her whims. Why, what of it, Tim?"

"Well, Misther Morehead, yez can see that some one will be kickin' yez on the shins and yez will not have a place to lay your head. Bedad, but the wiles of wimen are crafty and sometimes ould Satan is in their clothins. John Morehead, its Tim Morarity as sez it and moind yez that."

"Why, Tim, I supposed that it did not make much difference about putting the title to my property in Florence's name. It is in the family, you see."

"Well," replied Tim, "I hope it is for the best. But

it is Tim Morarity's opinion that yez 'll see the wimen's rights in all its glory when Mrs. Morehead gets in one of her spells. She has got the trumph on yez and she'll play it for all it is worth or Tim Morarity is no prophet. It is you, Mr. Morehead, that should hold the trumph, includen three aces and a king to boot. Bedad, you give that woman an inch and she'll take the town, includen the suburbs. Begorra, but its meself what aint got any wife foolin' around wid dere masculine no'ions. Mr. Morehead, yez had bether get back what yez have lost."

So saying, Tim walked off and left John soliloquizing to himself;

"Tim talks honest and blunt, and his view of the transaction appears to be reasonable. It may be I have made a blunder in making my property over to Florence. I'll go at once and have a talk with Squire Bloss and Lawyer Smart."

So, suiting the action to the word, he at once sought the office of the squire. He found that dignitary in conference with Lawyer Smart, as he entered the room. He found the demeanor of these worthies entirely changed. Instead of the blandness and courtesy shown on former occasions, there was gruffness and resentment. They informed him that the mortgage was better than any title, and that as soon as it became due proceedings would at once be commenced to close it up.

As for him he could content himself as best he could, for the title was in another person's name, and even if redeemed he could do nothing. Mrs. Morehead controlled the matter and they would soon have her title.

A light began to dawn on John's mind. He began to see that he was duped into a conspiracy and from all present appearances there was no help for it. Money now was what was wanted; but where could he procure it?

Slowly he left the office and turned his steps homeward. As he reached his home, he went to his room and said to himself:

"Yes I have been duped and made a party to a concocted scheme. John Morehead you are a fool to be thus drawn into that plot. What will people say—Mr. Morehead did it to smuggle his property. They will point their fingers and say there goes the man who made away with his property. And they may add: 'He did it to defraud his creditors.' I did as I was advised—for the best, God knows. Florence cannot, will not prove unfaithful. That mortgage—it is there—it hangs like a load of lead. Money will pay it. But where is that money to come from? Yes money will do it. Money, money, money. O, yes, if I had it I could work myself blind to get it. I would coin my very heart's blood for money. In the name of high Heaven, that money must be forthcoming. O ye Gods, who know the end of this, give me a shylock or anyone to loan me this money. I'll pledge a pound of my flesh for it—yes more, I'll give my right hand for it. Come weal, come woe, I'll have the money. I see it all now—it is the lever that moves the world, and I'll have it. One pound of flesh, nay ten pounds, I'll give but I'll have it."

CHAPTER XX.

Almost two weeks after the foregoing incidents occurred, Mrs. Dedcom found her way to the Morehead mansion dwelling and as usual began to gossip the news of the day.

"Well, Florence, they tell me that John has made over the title to his property to you. Well, now, if that aint just right. I tell you, Florence, we women are going to have things our way a while; you'll see. Women are going to have their rights. Do you know if Brother

Matthews has any real estate or not? I'll see to it that it will be put in my name."

Mrs. Dedcom was running on at snch a rate that Florence could hardly get a word in; but, seeing no other way, she finally interrupted her with:

"Why, Mrs. Dedcom, I've got it; yes, and I'm going to hold it. John is good enough in his way, but Lawyer Smart says it is best to be in my name. So they fixed it up—he and Squire Bloss. And it is all right, and John can go about his business. I'm going to have things, I am. I don't care for all the Moreheads in Christendom. Did you see that new silk gown that Deacon Strong's wife had on at church—the horrid old thing. Wonder where the money comes from to buy those things. A thing like her to have a silk gown like that one. The deacon can't afford it, I know."

"Yes," continued Mrs. Dedcom, "and there is that daughter of hers. Aint she a pretty thing to be talking to Brother Matthews—confidentially I suppose. Yes I reckon, confidentially. Now Florence, I'm going to have this matter stopped at once. I'll have Brother Matthews informed of how things are. I'll talk to him myself, I will."

"Mrs. Dedcom," said Florence, putting on a grave look, "I thought I would talk to Brother Matthews myself. I think it would be more fitting that one of the church members talk the matter over with him. In fact, I think I have married the wrong man. I've got the property in my own name and can do as I please. I think I am the proper one to talk to him on matters of that kind. You, Mrs. Dedcom, might say things to offend our minister."

Mrs. Dedcom was not expecting this turn in the conversation and was not a little taken back. But rallying herself, she pettishly replied:

"Why, Florence, I don't see but I have the best right to talk to him. Don't I go to church and I am as good as any of you. I'm the proper one to talk to him and I am going to do it, and I don't think you ought to interfere."

Florence drew herself up in a dignified way and flatly told Mrs. Dedcom that she was meddling where she had no business.

"Well, well, Mrs. Morehead, if it comes to that, what business has a married woman to be talking to other men? You had better be looking after your sick boy. I'll give you to understand, Mrs. Morehead, that you must not be meddling with my affairs," snappishly.

At this, Florence went to the door and opening it wide, motioned her visitor out. Things seemed to have suddenly taken a turn. Dark clouds were looming up in the sky.

As time passed, John Morehead's financial condition did not improve—in fact, he became more and more cramped, and he was peevish and exciteable. He frequently indulged in irritable arguments and debates. The time was fast approaching when the mortgage would be due on his property, and no visible means to liquidate it.

Florence, too, was becoming more and more unwomanly in her demeanor towards John, and on several occasions had given him to understand that he might look out for himself; that if he could not take care of her she would find some one that could.

He had several conferences with Squire Bloss and had been given to understand that the mortgage would be closed at maturity. These and other matters relating to financial affairs made John Morehead anything but pleasant in his temper.

Squire Bloss had served as justice for several years and it was his almost universal custom that when an offence was committed by anyone, whether proven guilty or not, to bind him or them over. That, in his estimation, would vindicate the majesty of the law. His decision was, "Will have to bind you over to the Circuit Court, sir."

On one occasion John was endeavoring to reason and settle some matter with his wife. She at once concluded that now was the time to show her authority and settle the question of women's rights. And as John became earnest in his talk to Florence, and being somewhat excited, Florence left the house and went in search of the marshal. Having found that officer, she demanded that John should be arrested and dealt with according to law.

So the marshal led John away to Squire Bloss. That august personage, too eager to get an accusation against John, after hearing the complaint, decided that John Morehead should be "bound over."

"Your honor," says John, "I am not guilty of anything that I should be held to bail."

"No matter," replies the squire; "the decision of this court is that you be bound over."

And that was final.

As the marshal and John left the squire's office, they were met outside by a burly looking lad who was looking for the squire-

"Just in there," replies the marshal, "you will find him."

"Well," says the lad, "I want to see if I have to pay a fine."

"Why, what have you been doing?" says the marshal.

"Well," replies the lad, "there was a big boy down town came at me with a club and said he would knock

me down, and I hauled away with my fist and knocked him down; and some one said I'd be fined. So I thought I'd see the squire."

"Why, no," replies the marshal. "You were not the aggressor. The other one is the boy to be fined."

Then turning to John, he said:

"Go and get your bail. I'll see about this new case."

So the marshal took the boy in and stated the case to the squire, After the squire heard the case, he gave in his decision as follows:

"It is the order of the court that you be bound over."

So it was the squire's custom, and his edicts were pronounced very emphatically.

As there was no difficulty with John Morehead in procuring bail, he went back to his home sad and depressed in spirits. Seating himself, he bowed his head in his hands some time, in deep thought. Then suddenly rousing up, he commenced to pace the floor.

"Has it come to this—John Morehead bound over to court and no offence committed?"

This he said in low and measured tones, but became more earnest as he continued:

"Yes, here I am, a criminal in the eyes of the law, but not in justice. What am I coming to, thus to be dealt with? Why did I make my property over to my wife? And why does she treat me so slightingly? Yes, she has the advantage of me now. A noble woman would not do that. Why can't she help to bear my cares and burdens in this sore time of trial. But here I am, a criminal before the world. A criminal, did I say? That sounds strange. Have not I always striven to do what was right? Yes. Have I willfully and maliciously wronged anyone? No, no, John Morehead, you are not a criminal. The powers of hell have combined against me to ruin me—to drag me down—to rob me.

I'll stand before the judge of the world and proclaim it that I'm not a criminal. I have been foully dealt with —I see it—I know it. I'll demand that the title to my property be made back to me. Some person or persons has concocted a plot to ruin me, to defraud me of my just rights. I'll meet the powers of Satan and Hell—"

"Hould on, Misther Morehead. In the name of all the Saints, fwat is the matter wid yez? Is it goin' mad, ye are?"

Tim had just come in as John was reaching for his hat to go out. He had neyer saw Mr. Morehead in such a passion before and was taken all aback on hearing him talking at such a rate.

"Why, Tim," replies John, "I'm not crazy, nor mad. No, indeed, but I've been foully dealt with; and Tim, don't you think that Squire Bloss has bound me over!"

"Bound yez over. the dirty black—" Tim was going to say but caught himself. He had been brought up to respect civil magistrates and recollecting that the man he was about to anathematize was a justice of the peace, he forbore to finish the sentence. And then he commenced to flourish his shelalah and continued:

"I'd like to see the man as wad bind yez over, Misther Morehead. They'd feel the weight of me shelalah. What in the wurld is the matter wid yez? Tell it me. Tim Morarity will see that no harum befall yez."

"Well, you see, Tim, they have got me to deed all my property away."

"The dirty spalpeens, who did it?"

"And then Florence, she has given me the cold shoulder, and Squire Bloss bound me over for pleading for my rights—and John Morehead stands today before the world a criminal, for only dareing to assert his rights. And now, on all this trouble, the mortgage on my property is becoming due. True, they have got the

title out of my hands, but I have it to pay off. And where in God's name it is to come from, can't be told."

Tim listened eagerly as John told his complaints and spoke out:

"Bedad, Misther Morehead, I can see it. The divil's own imp herself is at the bottom of all this. Don't you see it? Florence says she has married the wrong man. She has got the title away from yez, and thin thim spalpeens houlds the mortgage on ye and they will soon have Florence's right and close up the mortgage and take the whole ball of wax, do ye see? Yez 'ave bin taken sthock in the wimen's rights parade. It is as plain as the feathers in a peacock's tail, so it is, and a moighty foin tail it is."

"I see it, Tim; I see it all now."

"Yis, an yez 'ill see fun before yez git out iv thim clutches," replies Tim.

As John Morehead turned to walk out, he was met in the hall by Rosa, who urged her father to come to Erney at once.

"O my poor boy, I have neglected him. Troubles come now thick and fast on me," said John, as he hastened to the bedside of his sick boy, Rosa leading him by the hand.

As he entered the sick chamber of his boy, Erney reached out his thin, emaciated hand and taking that of his father's in its feverish clasp, he spoke:

"Papa, dear papa, I know you are in trouble. I wish I could help you. Aint this house yours, papa? I am afraid some bad persons have got it away from yeu. Mama is good and she will help you out of any trouble."

As Erney spoke these words, he bowed his head and wept.

"Why papa, what makes you cry? I was once a wayward boy. I was bad sometimes and did not do

what you told me. But I am good now and you will forgive me, papa, I know you will."

As Erney spoke these words, John Morehead could stand it no longer, and rousing up, with a mighty effort he calmed himself and embracing his boy tenderly, he spoke:

"Yes, my dear boy, forgive you a thousand times. Yes I forgive you, my dear boy. But it is I who should ask forgiveness of my dear one—for not being more watchful over your sickness. Yes. my child, it is I who am to ask forgiveness of that gentle spinit, for my seeming unfaithfulness."

Long and silently John Morehead held that wasted form in his arms. Then carefully and tenderly laying him on his couch, he slowly and silently left the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Now, squire," observed Lawyer Smart, as they sat together in the office of the former, "that mortgage we hold on John Morehead's property will soon be due and I am informed that he cannot raise the money to pay it off. So we will have nothing to do but to close down and take in the spoils, as he cannot redeem it."

"I wonder why his friends don't help him out on this matter?" said the squire, as he lit his pipe and sat down for a social smoke.

"Well, I am inclined to think," said Lawyer Smart, "that Florence is a hindering cause, as she is extravagant and money and finery appear to be her sole delight."

"Well that part of the game will soon come to an end, as we cannot afford to advance any more money on her realty," the squire replied. "We must have a pretty heavy margin to back us up in this. It wont do to advance any more. It must be stopped at once."

"I wonder why that Tim Morarity is staying around

the Moreheads so much, the hair brained Irishman. He don't give me very kind looks when he passes me," says Lawyer Smart. "The fellow has been with John for several years and appears to be a fast friend of the Moreheads."

"Well, well, he don't amount to much anyway and I shall give him to understand that he must obey the law or be bound over," the squire replied.

Neither one of these dignitaries was aware that Tim was at that time looking in at the open door until the last remark of the squire, which caused Tim to speak out:

"An its bindin iv me over yez are afther, and fwat for I moight inquire of yours lordships. Bedad, an I'm thinkin yez'll have a foin time ov bindin' a peaceful mon on free American sile over. Out wid yez nonsense. It ud be better if ye wad be bindin' yezselves over, I'm thinkin', and you would not be settin' there concoctin' skames against a mon as fought for his country undther the sthars and the sthripes for Uncle Sam. If yez wad bind ould nick himself over to the regions of the damned, I'm thinkin' yez wad do well. Whoop, hurrah, ballawhack! but its Tim Morarity that will tache yours honors worships a lesson wid me shelalah as niver missfired. Yer concoctin' schames forenest John Morehead and yez'll have Tim to foight and moind yez that."

Though putting on a bold front, Lawyer Smart and Squire Bloss began to wince at the remarks of Tim—in fact, they did not know but their talk was all overheard by him, and that they did not want to get into the outside world. But not wishing to show any weakness that might betray them, they requested Tim to go away and attend to his own affairs.

So he very reluctantly walked away, remarking as he did so "that some people were no better than others," at

the same time shaking his shelalah at the two men.

"Yes," he continued as he walked along, "I fout und-her the American flag and I am not goin' to be bound over, de ye see?"

CHAPTER XXII.

When John Morehead left the sick chamber of his boy, he went directly to his private room and seating himself, he collected his confused thoughts as best he could and then began to revolve in his mind what was best to be done. Money was what he wanted. He went to his desk and began to fumble his papers over, yet he scarcely knew or thought what he was doing. His mind was wandering. He thought of his sick boy, his business, his wife,—all went rushing through his brain like flashes of fire.

While thus engaged, he opened a bundle of letters and commenced reading on the back of one, to Drexel, Morgan & Co., St. Louis, Mo. As he slowly read it over, a light began to dawn on his mind—that firm was a banking house. Then taking the letter from the envelope, he carefully opened it and read:

"John Morehead is hereby authorized by this letter of credit to draw on me, at sight, for any sum not exceeding two thousand dollars, for services rendered me in saving myself, wife and child from drowning in a steamboat disaster.

"Signed, W. L. MORRISON, Captain.

"To Drexel, Morgan & Co., Bankers, St. Louis, Mo."

The matter now came fresh to his mind. He recollected that the captain gave him that letter of credit at the time of the rescue. He had laid it away with other papers and he had forgotten it. But as he read it over and over, his countenance became lit up as it were with a smile and feeling of relief.

But then a question arose in his mind, "Should he draw on the captain for two thousand dollars? Would

the draft be honored? Two thousand dollars is a large sum."

Over two years had elapsed since the letter of credit was given. Doubts began to rise in the mind of John Morehead. But then again, there was the letter of credit. It was all right; there could be no mistake about it—a debt of honor, as it were.

His mind was at once made up. On the morrow he would forward a draft for thousand dollars. The party might be dead or gone to other parts. He could but fail--he was resolved to try.

On the next day John drew a draft for the amount and forwarded it to the banking firm as indicated in the etter of credit and quietly awaited an answer.

In the meantime the mortgagees had commenced proceedings to foreclose on his property. Matters were coming to a crisis. Everything looked dark ahead but the draft, and that was very uncertain. What could he do? Simply nothing but sit down and wait. In his extremity he very naturally turned to aunty for consolation and advice.

"Well, John, thee knows that Job said the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Thee must be resigned to thy fate. The things of this world are all transient in their nature. Thee must not put thy trust in riches," said aunty in a sentimental way.

"Well, aunty, you must be about right. That is scripture, although according to our doctrine we are to lay up enough of this world's goods to supply our wants."

"Well, John," continued aunty, "thee must not let thy wants be too many. Thee must curb thy desires. The good Lord will prosper thee in all that is right. First, John, we must now turn all our attention to Erney. He, I fear, is not long for this world."

"I know it, aunty, I know it; and my already overburdened heart, I fear, will break when the worst comes. Troubles come not single handed. But let us at once go to Erney. I shall not leave his bedside again until he is better."

So saying, the two repaired to the sick chamber of the dear boy. For days John and aunty watched by the bedside of Erney, doing all in their power for the invalid; but it became more and more evident every day that the little sufferer would never again be able to leave the sick room. The watch by the side of the boy was not relaxed day or night.

Days were lengthened into weeks and weeks into months, but no tidings were obtained from the draft forwarded to the bankers in St. Louis by John Morehead.

Suit had been commenced to close on the mortgage and the judgment rendered, and the property advertised for sale.

John became despondent and refused to talk to anyone. Why he could get no reply to his letter was a mystery. He saw his property about to be taken from him—that for which he had spent the best part of his life to accumulate. True he owed the debt for which it was mortgaged—justly and honestly he owed it. But by patience and perseverance he was sure that he could, if given time, redeem it.

He now watched constantly with his sick boy. It was only a question of time that he must be laid in the silent tomb.

One evening as Rosa and her father were sitting by the bedside of Erney, the front door bell rung. Rosa went to answer the call, and as she opened the door she observed a tall young man standing on the step confronting her. And as she stood in the doorway, the

man retreated a step, then modestly inquired if Mr. Morehead was in.

As he spoke, Rosa gave one scream and retreated back into the hall. That voice she knew. She could not be mistaken. It was William Ramble that stood before her. And as she recovered herself, William spoke again:

"Miss Morehead—Rosa, I mean—I have come to bring your father good news. But perhaps he will not admit me into his dwelling."

But Rosa urged him to come into the parlor aud be seated. She would attend to her father.

Hesitatingly, William went into the parlor and took the proffered seat. And he did so, he informed Rosa that he had just arrived from St. Louis and had some important business with her father, and desired that he see him at once.

Rosa's cheeks burned like fire. She was in a critical place. But summoning all her energy, she went to her father and informed him that a person was in the parlor who wished to speak with him on important business. She would not tell her father who it was, for she was afraid that he would refuse to see him.

Mr. Morehead slowly arose from his seat, stepped into the parlor and as he did so, William Ramble stood face to face with him. Then extending his hand to John, he addressed him.

"Mr. Morehead, I presume you know me. You certainly have not forgotten me, although near three years have elapsed since I left here. William Ramble is my name."

John Morehead was about to reply, when William continued:

"I have come on an errand. I represent the banking

house of Drexel, Morgan & Co., of St. Louis," at the same time handing John his card.

As John took the card, he hastily read it and observed that the name of William Ramble was at the bottom as assistant cashier. First he looked at the card and then at William Ramble. He was completely taken aback. But not wishing to appear rude, he gave his hand to Mr Ramble and with a good shake bade him be seated; and then taking a chair himself, the two entered into conversation.

"Mr. Morehead, you drew a draft on the house of Drexel, Morgan & Co., in St. Louis, some time ago. Said draft was to be honored by W. L. Morrison."

John nodded assent and began to explain, when William Ramble continued:

"The draft was forwarded by us for acceptance and the payee being absent, caused the delay. But now I have come to bring you the good news that the draft has been accepted by Mr. Morrison and here it is for $2,000."

It was some time before John Morehead could speak, but collecting himself and choking down a great big "God bless you," he took the proffered draft; and then seizing William by the hand, he was only able to say, "You are welcome here."

"But how in the world did you get into that banking house as assistant cashier?" observed John.

"Well, to make a long story short," says William, "Tim Morarity left me at Memphis where I had a situation as bill clerk. Becoming acquainted with several steamboat captains, I was in due time promoted to a clerk on one of those big New Orleans steamers. Then I became acquainted with business men of capital and by the influence of friends, was offered a place in that banking house as assistant cashier—about one year ago.

When your draft was presented to the house, I knew at once that you were in trouble, and as soon as opportunity offered, I asked for and obtained leave of absence for two weeks in order to bring you the good news and the money. I am well aware, Mr. Morehead, that when I left here I was forbidden to enter your house. I determined to remove the stigma from my record and make a man of myself, and climb to the top of the ladder, if possible; and here I am; and I hope you will forgive the intrusion."

Rosa, who had been a listener all the time to the conversation between William and her father, and as he finished his story, she stepped out and clasping her father about his neck with her slender arms, she broke out:

"I told you so, father. I knew that William would make a man of himself. Now you will welcome him to our house—I know you will, dear papa."

Then, as if anticipating her father's answer, she took William's hand and bid him welcome.

"Yes," Mr. Morehead replied, "Mr. Ramble, you will make it your home while you stay here."

Just then there was a burly head poked inside the door, and Tim's head and shoulders were thrust into the room uncermoniously; and as he stood there a few moments, he took in the situation and then with a sly wink wink at William and Rosa, he spoke up.

"I'm thinkin' that if yez wad go over to the squire's he wad bind yez over, providen yez have the papers and Mr. Morehead is willin'."

"Never mind that, Tim," John replied; "we'll see to that."

Tim was overjoyed at the good fortune of John Morehead and fairly danced an Irish jig. But John admon-

ished them that the sick chamber must be attended to and Erney have their undivided care.

So the happy meeting broke up and each one retired to their allotted place.

CHAPTER XXIII.

On the morrow John Morehead was at the office of Squire Bloss very early in order to liquidate the mortgage on his property—in fact, he was ahead of that important functionary, but did not wait long until the squire put in his appearance.

He did not know of John's good fortune and therefore treated him cooly, and wanted to know what brought him there so early.

John replied by saying that he had come over to pay off the mortgage on his property, at the same time producing the draft.

Had a thunder clap struck the squire's office, he could not have been more surprised; and it was quite a while before he recovered his equilibrum. But all at once his demeanor towards John was changed, and putting on his blandest smile, he extended his hand to him and began to congratulate him on his good fortune in being able to pay off the incumbrance on his property, although he had secretly hoped that Mr. Morehead would not be able to redeem it and he would thereby be the winner of it.

After the release was made out and duly signed, John again sought the sick chamber of his dear boy. True, a mighty load was lifted from his over-burdened mind and he felt a great relief; but then there was dear boy laying in the grasp of that dread disease consumption, his wasted form shrunk almost to a skeleton. Could he be called back to health and vigor again, he would sacrifice all he had in this world. But he hoped against fate. It

was only a question of time and Erney must go.

Could John Morehead have had the solace and kindly smiles of his wife the blow would not be so hard. It would be softened by the kind and gentle words of a loving wife. But no such sympathy was in store for him. He must watch by the bedside of the litttle sufferer and see his child-like spirit go out.

"That life which had at first promised so much, and would be the light and joy of his father, must be cut short in the bud. But why mourn, why be downcast? A far better life awaited the invalid than could be attained in this world. He was summoned to go and that inexorable one must be obeyed. He could not come back, but I can go to him.'"

These thoughts rushed through the father's mind as he watched by the little sufferer day by day until the end was finally approaching.

One morning, about ten days after the payment of the money that freed the property of the Moreheads, Erney, after a restless night, called to his father to come to him. Although his voice was weak, yet he spoke with clearness.

"Papa," said he, "I heard you say that you had paid off the debt on our home and no one had a claim on it. Is that so?"

"Yes, my dear boy, we are now clear of that debt. It no longer hangs over us; and I shall be so happy, Erney, when you get better and go out with me and enjoy the pure air."

Erney extended his thin, emaciated hand and took that of his father and replied:

"No, dear papa, no, I shall not go out again in this world. I am now ready to die. I saw in my dream last night a beautiful city. There were beautiful flowers, and birds that sang so sweetly. And then there were

beautiful men and angel women there. There was no sickness, sorrow nor pain there."

His voice grew faint and sank into a whisper as the father bent over his son. But the sufferer rallied again and spoke out:

"Papa, call mama, and Rosa and aunty to come."

Hastily summoning the dear ones that Erney had named, John Morehead returned to the bedside of the fast sinking boy. He was followed in by the members of the family, and as they stood around the bed, each one was impressed with the solemnity of the moment. Erney lay for a few minutes evidently awaiting for his strength to return. Then casting a fond and affectionate look on each one, he extended his thin hand to his mother.

"Mama, you and papa will be happy now when I am gone; and Rosa, you will be so happy with papa and mama, and William. And this dear home is all yours now; it is all paid for—papa paid it all. No one can take it from you. And then you will meet me in that beautiful land where I am going—where there are such beautiful bright angels, and birds, and flowers; and we will all be so happy. Mama, I know you will like dear papa and Rosa, and all live here together."

As Erney had summoned all his strength to talk, he fell back on the bed entirely exhausted. Once, nay twice, he endeavored to rally, but nature had been tried to its utmost extent and he lay almost lifeless. Once again a struggle, a faint struggle, the lips moved as if to speak, then all was still in death. That gentle spirit had gone to its reward among the bright angels, and flowers, and birds he loved so well in this world.

For several minutes there was the stillness of death in that chamber—no one spoke, no one moved. Florence was as a marble statue. Her face only gave signs that

the body contained life. From the hue of life on her cheeks there came the whiteness of marble; but there was a fierce struggle going on in her breast. There was something there—a long absent passion contending for supremacy. That passion had been dethroned and a stranger for years. Would it predominate and assert its right? It was a terrible struggle. As the storm-tossed bark on the ocean when it nears the harbor of safety, did reason begin slowly to come back to the mind of Florence. Like a panorama, her past life rose up before her to mock her in those few brief moments. It was but a few; then when she fully realized that Frney was dead, she uttered a scream of despair and fell at the bedside of the corps, and begged piteously for the life of her boy to be brought back again. For some time she sobbed and moaned, and would not be comforted.

"O, why did you tell me that Erney would die! I know I've not done my duty as a mother ought John Morehead, I have not done my duty as wife should do to her husband. I have been led astray by that silly woman, Mrs. Dedcom. I scorned the good advice of others. It seemed to me that I must rule or ruin. I went beyond my proper sphere. I was blinded and led astray by designing and malicious persons. O why did I not act the woman—the true wife! O my dear boy has been taken from me! O, what would I give if Erney was alive again and restored to my arms! O thou God in Heaven, hear my prayer and give me back my boy. John Morehead, can you, will you forgive me?"

Completely exhausted, Florence lay as if almost lifeless; but rallying again, was about to go on, when aunty thus addressed her:

"Florence, it seems that thee has sown the wind and it has returned to thee in the whirlwind. Thee must

calm thyself. God hears prayers when offered in the right spirit. But to call back the life of thy boy to this sinful world would be against the will of God who doeth all things well. We must all bow in humble submission to His all-wise decrees."

But Florence would not be consoled. Again she sobbed out:

"O, aunty, will you forgive me? Rosa, will you forgive me? John Morehead, let me once more in the presence of our dear dead boy ask your forgiveness."

"Yes, John," broke in aunty, "it is thy duty to forgive thy wife; not only seven times, but seventy times seven."

As she thus addressed him, he extended his hand to Florence and tenderly raised her from the prostrate condition, as she had been lying on the floor all the time, and speaking out from the depths of his manly heart, he said:

"Forgive you, my dear wife? God knows I do, from the bottom of my heart and may God bless you. For years I have longed for the time to come when I could hear one good kind word drop from your lips—one true womanly word. Yes, I can say I forgive and forget the past. I, too, ask forgiveness for my waywardness and seeming neglect. I have this to ask, not only of you, Florence, my dear wife, but of my neighbors, also."

"No, John, you have done nothing to be forgiven. Henceforth I will be to you the wife, and we will travel the balance of life's journey together as man and wife should—in peace and harmony."

"Yes, my dear children," said aunty, "the Lord chasteneth whom he loveth, and you can make amends for the past in kind and mutual acts of love and friendship towards one another; and although your journey through life thus far has been strewn with thorns and thistles, yet from now on to the end of your lives let there be

roses instead of thistles and flowers instead of thorns And now, John, I see that thee has got past the third and last yellow ball. Now let thy light so shine that others seeing thy good works may do likewise. And you, dear Florence, having seen the folly of thy former life by presuming that thee married the wrong man, show to the world and thy neighbors that there is a proper sphere for women in this world, which is to be the ministering angel in times of trouble not only to thy husband but to all the world."

THE END.

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